

**CHARLES
WATSON
SPEAKS
OUT!**

**A Riveting 200+ Question Interview
with Former Manson Cult Member**



**Charles D.
Watson**

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Copyright

Charles Watson Speaks Out

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First, the many clergymen, radio personalities, video interviewers and others who have helped to generate the questions used in this interview; I am deeply grateful for your stand that everyone's life has redeeming value.

My thanks to the many high school and college students who have had to ask me countless questions about the Manson family and the murders, due to assigned reports. Hopefully this interview will be of help to you. I did it with you in mind. God's best to you.

Lastly, my thanks to Joshua, Kristin, Pat, Cheryl, Janis, Terry, and Lyle who have spent many hours at the computer on this project. May God's richest blessings be upon each of you for your commitment to the work of the ministry.

Dedication

This book is dedicated to my late father and mother, Denton and Elizabeth, who endured so much because of my past foolishness. Thank you Mom and Dad for your unconditional love, flowing from our Heavenly Father above.



Charles does not profit financially from this book.

About the Author

Charles was born in 1945, in Dallas, Texas. He grew up in Copeville, 35 miles north of Dallas. He left Texas for California in 1967, believing that out west promised satisfaction through drugs, sex and rock 'n roll.

In California, he enrolled in college and secured a job, but soon dropped out in exchange for the fast life. He met Charlie Manson and ended up becoming a member of the "Manson Family." He was part of this group for a year. Manson offered a utopia, but in reality he had a destructive worldview, which Charles ended up believing in and acting upon. His participation in the 1969 Manson murders is a part of history that he deeply regrets.

For participation in these crimes, he received the death penalty, but this was overturned in 1972. Charles remained imprisoned with a life sentence. Three years later, Christ came into his heart and called him into the ministry. He began ministry training and co-authored the book, *Will You Die For Me?* in 1978. This book has touched thousands of prisoners spiritually. He founded the original Abounding Love Ministries in 1980 and became an ordained minister in 1981. He has spent all these years ministering to prisoners and to others around the world.

His website, www.aboundinglove.org, was created in 1997, and has received millions of hits worldwide. In recent years, he wrote the book, *Manson's Right Hand Man Speaks Out!* to answer the many questions he is still asked in interviews and through letters. His notorious past is a tragedy from any point of view, but for almost four decades, his life has testified to the awesome grace of God.

Charles is a man of peace and character, who shines brightly in a dark place. His identity has shifted from that of a murderer to a child of God. He no longer allows his crime to identify who he is. He sees himself as God sees him — a new creation in Christ.

He is not only a man of faith, but of compassion. He walks the prison yard while sharing what it means to be a Christian. He fellowships with other Christians and helps them to see God as their heavenly Father who loves them unconditionally.

He shares a Godly wisdom that has come through past failures and years of spiritual, mental and emotional growth. In 2009, he completed a B.S. Degree in Business Management.

He rejects "legalistic Christianity," where people are led to believe they can earn their salvation through their own good works, because right standing with God is possible only through faith in the finished work of Jesus Christ. He lives every day reaching out to unbelievers with the grace of God and prays with believers to understand their awesome inheritance obtained through their union with Christ's death, burial and resurrection.

From Manson To Salvation

An interview for everyone, covering 10 intriguing subjects chapter by chapter. For the historian, you'll find factual information. Parents will receive counsel for raising successful children. Students will be assisted with their research. Teenagers will find answers. And for those searching, they'll find the Truth and see at last how to stop the pain!

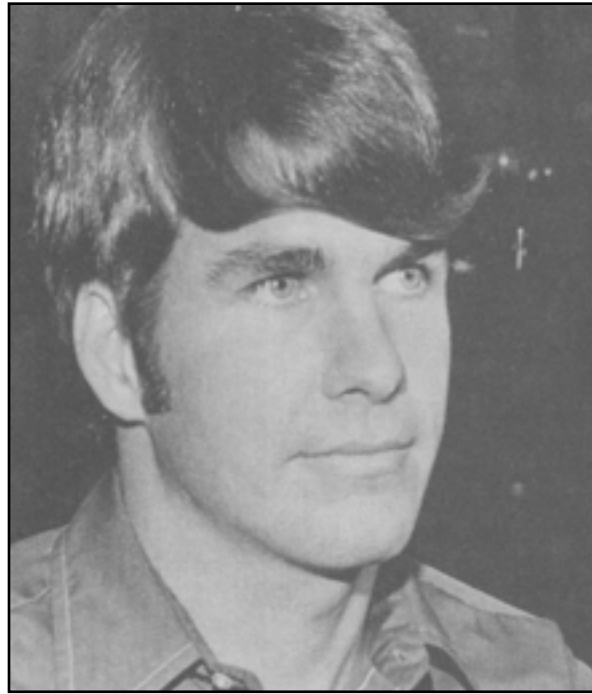
This book of 200+ Questions and Answers unveils fresh, new insights into the 1969 Manson madness. The love of a merciful Heavenly Father is revealed, who received Charles Watson out of his rebellion.

The story line is similar to the parable of the "prodigal son." Charles left his parents in Texas against their wishes. He took all his possessions to California in search of fulfillment. He enrolled in college, got a job and tried to fill the void in his heart with drugs and rock 'n roll. He quickly hit bottom, dropping out of college and ended up shoveling manure at a run-down movie ranch along with a couple of dozen other mischievous souls, later named the "Manson Family."

Charles was too proud to return to his family a failure. Instead he committed his life to the beliefs of an ex-convict named Charles Manson. In his blindness, he chose to believe a lie and commit murder for approval and acceptance. Only then did Charles return to his family; a murderer, and an angry and depressed young man.

Afterwards, God in His love began to heal Charles' hardened, unbelieving heart. This book proclaims, "God can heal anyone, no matter how far one has fallen." Charles is now reaping what he has sown because of his painful past, but as you will see, his life testifies that there is Good News no matter what!

Preface



Charles sits in Collin County courtroom during hearing on whether to extradite him to California.

He had fled home to Texas after the Tate-LaBianca murders.

It was the summer of love, 1967, when a young, 21 year-old All-American Texas kid dropped out of college and left his family for California. Two years later his name and participation in the Manson murders would make headlines around the world — Charles “Tex” Watson, Mass-Murderer.

Stories are often told of young people in rebellion who run away from their families, not able to deal with their pain in a positive way. Sadly, many of these youngsters don't live to tell their stories as Charles Watson has, so their lives can't be a lesson for the families of other rebellious children.

The life of Charles Watson was a failure in California. He enrolled in college to finish his senior year, but dropped out in order to make a living instead. Soon he allowed rebellion to take over. When he accidentally met up with Manson, his life went downhill fast. The effects of his sin (drugs, illicit sex and joining the Manson family) were not his root problem, but rather his own willful, deluded self, and his prideful, unbelieving heart.

Charles Manson was a loser many times over. He was the son of a prostitute. He lacked a proper education, but was self-taught in many subjects during his years in prison. He was a master of disguise. He learned how to manipulate people with his charismatic personality. Slowly, he gathered his followers, mostly girls, along with a few faithful men. Charles Watson became one of these followers in 1968 — Manson's right-hand man.

Manson used a cult mentality, drugs, music, psychology, Scientology, sorcery and a combination of mystical skills to beguile his followers so that they would be willing to kill, and give their lives for him. To this day, Manson has followers around the world who carry his message of hate, deception and destruction forward.

Manson's "helter skelter" philosophy prophesied a world in chaotic confusion. He believed the blacks would be blamed for the murders and retaliate against the whites in an all out race war. His family would escape to the safety of the desert where the blacks would eventually come to him for instructions.

After the murders in 1969, Watson turned from Manson and returned to his family as a prodigal son. He has used his many years in prison productively. The interview you are about to read is one project with which he felt it necessary to be involved. Never attempting to shift blame from himself, he hopes to share new insights into the Manson madness, and to share positive solutions to problems in society, including victim mentality, the death penalty, prison reform and forgiveness. He prays that many will learn and be touched by these efforts.

"But God hath chosen the foolish things of this world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty..." (1 Corinthians 1:27).

Manson



Charles Manson at the time of the Tate-LaBianca murder trial.

Q: Would you rather be called Tex or Charles?

Charles is preferred. I was only called “Tex” for the year I was with the Manson family, then the news media picked it up and it stuck. When people call me that, it's like they're talking to someone else. Not me! People recognize the name “Tex” Watson, so the nickname is used only as a testimony.

Q: Why did you agree to this interview?

Well, usually when people ask questions, I just tell them to read my book, *Will You Die For Me?* or Bugliosi's book, *Helter Skelter*. A person can get a lot of answers that way, but by giving this interview, I think I can offer some new insights, even after four decades. I still get letters all the time from students doing research and from inquiring minds. But whatever the motive, I feel an obligation to offer some explanation for these senseless crimes. I can possibly offer some answers so others won't end up like me, following some cult leader as a way to find approval, acceptance and appreciation.

Q: Is Bugliosi's book, *Helter Skelter*, fairly accurate?

Yeah, 85%, for what it covers, especially on Manson's philosophy, since he interviewed so many people close to Manson. But I feel my book gives a better inside account of what was going on, not strictly from the prosecution's point of view.

Q: How did you meet Manson?

I'm sure most people have heard of the group, the Beach Boys. Well, in 1968, I picked up their drummer, Dennis Wilson. He was hitchhiking on Sunset Boulevard because he had wrecked both of his cars. He introduced himself, and of course, I was starry-eyed; a 22-year-old greenhorn from Texas who couldn't believe one of the Beach Boys was asking me to come into his house for a cup of coffee. It didn't take me long to say, "Groovy, man!"



The Beach Boys in 1974. At right is Dennis Wilson who accidentally became Watson's link with Manson and the Family.

I walked into Dennis' log cabin-style mansion and I was very impressed. Dennis introduced me to an old white-bearded man named Dean, who smiled and said, "You've got to meet Charlie!" It seemed like everybody I met who knew Charlie, worshipped him! Dean showed me into the living room. Dennis had already relaxed on the couch and was listening to Charlie's music. So, Dean and I joined them as a couple of the girls served us sandwiches and coffee. It was like the girls were slaves, and the men were kings, meant to be served. There was this big chunk of hashish on the coffee table. As we smoked it and listened to Manson's love songs, I began to see why people looked up to Charlie. As he smiled at me, it seemed he could see right into me. It was like love filled the air. I left that night on cloud nine. I'm sure the hash had a great deal to do with it, but I couldn't believe what had just happened and couldn't wait to come back. Sure enough, Dennis asked me to come back anytime. I don't know if I was more impressed with Manson or Dennis Wilson.

Q: What was Manson really like back then?

He was much different than he is today. If I met him back then, as he is today, I'd run from him, scared for my life. Back then, he was much younger of course, with deceptive charisma. In my book, I think I described him as “always changing;” his movements, his appearance, his dress, becoming someone new everyday — rock star, guru, devil, son of God, even a child. He was a magician and a charmer. He was aware, almost catlike. His eyes were hypnotic having the ability to psyche you out immediately. I feel it was because of the drugs and the philosophies he had studied, but he was much more “aware” than we were.

In reality, we empowered him by giving him our lives. We were young, rebellious and even angry inside. I blamed my parents for everything going wrong instead of taking responsibility for my own choices. I was looking for love, identity, direction and acceptance. At the same time I was a very naïve “people-pleaser;” in fear of failure. I had no sound belief system. He seemed to have the answers in some strange way. But believe me, he was just as lost as the rest of us. We were deceived!

Q: What drew you to Manson, and what kept you there?

Of course, we've already touched on this a little, but it seemed the more we gave of ourselves to Manson and his philosophy, and the more we invested, the harder it was to leave. I did leave the family once, thinking I was losing my mind, and not willing to give up my life for him.

This happened on December 1, 1968. I'd been trying to prove myself to Manson for a couple of months, with little success. He made it hard. We went to Topanga Canyon Lane to see a friend, where we heard the Beatles' “White Album” for the first time. His interpretation of the album took off. I had already made up my mind to run away from him while in town, so I called a friend to come and pick me up. I sneaked away for at least 3 months, but something drew me back. While I was away, he came up with the Helter Skelter philosophy.

What drew me to him? It had everything to do with my own weaknesses. I think the world of psychiatry would call it codependency. In reality, I had needs that only God could meet. When I left Manson, it seemed like I was running from the answer for my life, because Charlie seemed to know all my weaknesses and the things I needed to give up. Charlie required our very life, laying it down for him. I could have chosen to return to Texas or go back to Hollywood and live with my friend, but my pride wouldn't let me. And it seems like I was blinded, taken in and surrounded by some strange force desiring my very soul. The more drugs I took and the more I totally gave myself to Manson's beliefs, the more it seemed I was getting somewhere. For sure, there was something evil about it all. The vocabulary seemed to be centered around a very dark reality: dying, death and destruction.

Q: How long were you with Manson?

I was only with Manson for nine months of a 12 month period. In late August 1968, I didn't have a place to live, so Dean and I moved to Spahn's Ranch, alongside a dry creek bed in a tent. This is where we started earning our way into the family. Dean didn't make it because he was too

old. I stayed for three months until December, and then ran away for three months. I then went back to the family for the six months before the crime, in August.

Shortly after the murders, while living in the desert, I ran away from Manson again. I was in a state of confusion, shock and disbelief. Finally, I went back to Texas, extremely depressed. It was like going into another world.

Q: Charles, you were raised a lot differently than Manson. Can you tell me about your upbringing?

You're right. I was raised in a fine family with high standards and good morals. We went to church, only it didn't take. Growing up, I was an honor student, a star athlete and almost a college graduate. But at the same time, I had this void in my life that I've spoken about, a need that could only be satisfied spiritually. I was mixed up, in desperate search of fulfillment and I feared failure, running from my wonderful parents and family. I traded them for a bunch of lost, mischievous souls. I was a fool, rejecting my parent's instructions. I was hard-headed and chose to learn the hard way — by experience. Proverbs says, “...fools deceive themselves...fools plunge ahead with great confidence” (14:8,16, NLT).

Q: How did Manson manipulate his followers?

Manson simply played on our weaknesses. It was like he could see through you with the all-encompassing eye of God. For example, if we had an acceptance hang-up and he could see that we didn't feel accepted in the family, he and longstanding members would make it harder for us to be accepted. We were manipulated by guilt. This way we would try harder. Down the road, that trying harder would even mean murder. There was much peer pressure among family members and at the same time, none of us had good personal identities. Manson simply gave us new ones. That's when I became “Tex.”

Even though his music only sounded good while on drugs, it and the drugs were used to charm us; programming us with his philosophy, turning us from any previous values to very evil ones.

Manson's goal was to free us from our past, all sexual inhibitions, all ego and fear, and turn us into his image of love. Drugs such as LSD made us extremely open to suggestions and the force of a stronger personality. I didn't realize it until later, but Charlie was actually a sorcerer, using drugs to gain power, and using that power to manipulate us. Acid, combined with Charlie's diabolical personality and insight, turned us from rebellious kids to pliant slaves. I'd suggest reading my book *Will You Die For Me?* for greater insight on Manson's manipulation.

Q: Why did Manson's cult teachings demand that murder be committed?

See, part of Manson's philosophy pertained to a black-white race war. He thought the blacks would start it with a Hollywood slaughter, like the Tate-LaBianca murders. He said the blacks would be blamed for the murders, get mad and start a race war in the cities. And not only that, to Charlie, the Beatles were telling him to start it, through their songs.

Also, Manson thought he had to take things into his own hands when he saw that his prophetic philosophy, Helter Skelter, wasn't happening on its own. He needed money to finance Helter Skelter, you know, for guns, knives, dune buggies and the like. He tried to get money from musician Gary Hinman, but ended up having him killed instead.

When one of the family members, Bobby Beausoleil, was arrested for the murder, I was shocked! Then, a few days later, when Helter Skelter still wasn't "coming down," Manson thought a copycat murder would spring Bobby, and bring down Helter Skelter at the same time. He had built the Helter Skelter philosophy, and when it didn't happen, the copycat murder idea just gave him an excuse to start it. And at the same time, he thought the police would think the real killers of Hinman were still free to commit the Tate-LaBianca murders. Therefore, they would let Bobby go.

Q: Did Manson believe this Helter Skelter Philosophy, or was he just into controlling people?

Yeah, he believed it, but we also let him control us. Remember, I ran from Manson on December 1, 1968, the day we listened to the White Album together. That day he began to formulate part of his philosophy from the Beatles, because to him their music confirmed his black-white revolution theory. For the next three months, while I was away, he persuaded the hard-core family members with this madness. So much so, that when I was drawn back to the family at the end of February, all they could talk about was Helter Skelter coming down fast. To them, I was ignorant and blind and had a lot of catching up to do. I didn't know what they were talking about. My head was spinning from all this new insight.

Not only did Manson believe his philosophy with strong conviction, but also he took pride in it. He didn't tell us where he was borrowing it from, but to him the Beatles were confirming all he believed. Others believe he was a false prophet, *"For false messiahs and false prophets will rise up and perform great miraculous signs and wonders so as to deceive, if possible, even God's chosen ones"* (Matthew 24:24, NLT).

See, Manson was looking for answers all his life. He studied Scientology in prison, and claimed to have reached "theta clear." It's a shame he never saw the simple truth of God sending Jesus Christ for his sins, to give true love and peace. He was looking for love, something I think he lacked as a child and never accepted from God. Also, he wanted to be recognized for his music. We chose to follow him, thinking he had the answer. But in reality, we empowered him to form a cult. Really, he wanted to be God, Christ Himself, carrying out his own will much like Lucifer did (Isaiah 14).

Q: Should we be afraid of Manson?

No, not at all. He'll never get out of prison. And to fear Manson gives him power over your life. It seems the reason people fear him is because the Manson murders have taken on a life of their own. Movies based on the Manson Family come out often. I find these have little validity. The media bombards your thoughts with the possibility that it could happen to you. As a result, there is this built-up fear of Manson.

We should caution our children about him and the like, so they too don't get deceived. But to fear him gives him way too much power. In our minds, we made a monster out of Manson, and that plays right into his hands. His game is to make you fear him so he can control your mind. For myself, I remember this Scripture to keep things in perspective: *“For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind”* (2 Timothy 1:7).

In the '60s, Manson used both fear and love to control his followers. Manson knew that mankind is controlled by deadly fear. He even believed that love overcomes fear; not God's love, but his love. He taught this principle through his own devilish, selfish wisdom, much like terrorists are trained today. My young mind was very confused, not understanding the spirit of fear, or the power of God's love through Christ to free us from the fear of death.

Q: What are your feelings about Manson today?

Most people expect me to hate him, but the more I've become accountable for my part in the crime, the less I've blamed Manson. Even though I feel I was used by Manson, I forgive him for the deception. I even pray for him.

Manson is easy to hate. We are to hate what he stands for, but should we hate the individual? Again, to do so would be giving Manson power over our lives. I've chosen not to do that any longer, but rather to forgive.

Manson needs our prayers for salvation. His health is also failing, so he may not be with us much longer. God loves Charlie, and *“He does not want anyone to perish, so He is giving more time for everyone to repent”* (2 Peter 3:9b, NLT).

Q: So, do you think anyone exposed to Manson's philosophy could fall under his spell and do the things that he demanded, even murder?

No, not particularly. It was designed for my deception. I do believe it's possible for almost anyone to fall under a similar spell or philosophy in a situation designed for them. No one knows exactly what that would be for them. It would be different for everyone, depending on that person's weaknesses. Of course, as Christians we have power over these hellish deceptions by faith in Christ.

Q: So, what situations transpired in your life to cause you to fall under Manson's spell?

There were a lot of factors that came together at once, to cause me to fall under his spell. As you know, I was slowly dropping out of society. I went to live with Manson, who had a strong personality, versus my weak one. I felt like a failure, fearful of disappointing my family, and thinking that the love of the Manson family was what was missing. My spiritual identity was null and void and at the mercy of Manson's concepts. The isolation from society was a catalyst, as well as Manson's anger against society and my growing anger at my parents. But bottom line, the cause was my own sin of unbelief and disobedience against God and family.

The signs of the time, anti-war protest, race riots and the rebellious atmosphere of the flower children were things I could identify with. Physically, we were all lacking a good diet and proper

sleep. Peer pressure was tremendous in the family; that is, to be accepted and recognized by Charlie and the members. This, along with Charlie's propaganda, the misinterpretation of the Beatles' music and drugs took me over the edge.

Q: Do you think there's something innately wrong with someone who could commit such a horrible crime?

I believe there is something innately wrong with all of us by nature of being born. As a Christian, I believe sin passed upon all mankind through Adam and Eve's fall in the Garden of Eden. This is why we need to be born-again. We all have a heart problem that causes us to trust in ourselves instead of God.

But I understand your question. I think you are asking if some of us are born naturally as murderers and some not. I'd say no, we don't inherit it from our parents; it's acquired as we grow up, through the circumstances of our lives and the choices we make.

During my childhood, feelings for others and their cares and concerns were not taken into consideration, because of my self-centeredness. My life was based on looking good, feeling good, being right and in control. It was idolatry. I think through the use of drugs, I got to the place of being "past feeling," until my conscience sort of shut down. My judgments of right and wrong changed into very immoral ways. So, what I would normally do, I didn't do, and what I wouldn't normally do, I did. I had no idea that I would reap what I was sowing.

Furthermore, I learned many deadly ideas and values from various world views. I became ungodly and hopelessly confused. My mind became closed and full of darkness. I was far away from the life of God because I hardened my heart against Him (Ephesians 4:17-19).

Q: What do you think you would be doing today, if you had never met Manson?

I can't say for certain, because of my instability at the time. I think God originally had a great future planned for me. I believe I had a call on my life for the work of the ministry. I just got in the way of it. I came from a great family who had lofty goals in mind for me. If I had been obedient to my parents instead of rebellious, things would have gone well for me!

I wanted to be successful and have a family. I failed so miserably. But despite my grotesque sin and failure, God gave me a second chance. He has restored life to me, even though I'm in prison. My family still loves me, and I am now blessed with wonderful friends and a ministry to others.

The Cult

Q: Charles, we've talked about Manson's philosophy, but didn't you know that the Manson family was a cult?

I thought it was a commune. What was a cult in 1969? I think we were all ignorant about cults back then. I don't mean to plead ignorance, but I was never taught about cults. Today, we need to educate ourselves and our children. Everyone should start by looking in the dictionary at the definition of a cult. It speaks of the charismatic leader, extremist views, a colony of people and total devotion to each other.

We should watch out for these things, and always compare them with mainstream Christianity where our total devotion is to God, our Heavenly Father, not man. It has been said, "If you want to know the counterfeit, get to know the real thing." Cashiers in banks are taught how real money feels, not how counterfeit money feels. As we get to know the feel of the real bill, it is easy to spot the counterfeit when it comes along.

Q: What was life like with the Manson Family?

Life with the Manson family was lived on several levels: life on the surface; that which you could see, then, there was the level right under the surface; how we lived behind the scenes, and lastly, was what was going on spiritually; that which none of us could see.

On the surface, we were living a "Magical Mystery Tour," like the Beatles sang. We even had a place called "Yellow Submarine." We lived in an old, run-down cowboy movie ranch living a different fancy every day. We shared a huge pile of clothes and would change roles constantly. At the same time, we put up a good show running the ranch, renting horses and doing other odd jobs to earn our keep. The hard-core members were used to trap new members with sex and by sharing Manson's philosophy.

Q: Were the members scared of him?

Charlie would simply look at members, and immediately they would fall silent. But at the same time, some were almost willing to die for him. Everyone wanted to please Charlie and was fearful of his opinion of them. Myself, I ran from him several times in fear.

Q: How many members were there at any one time?

There were about twenty-five at the most, but I'd say there were sixteen who were the most committed. What scares me more is how many there are today. It's been reported that Manson gets stacks of letters from those desiring to join his cult. Many agree with his anti-establishment hatred, almost making him into some sort of folk hero.

Q: How did you view society?

Well, superficially, I had taken on many of Manson's views. In my mind, those views were constantly being challenged. I was double-minded between my past views and his. I felt I had failed to make it in society. On looking back, it was partially because of my own laziness, and no fault of society.

Q: What were Manson's views toward society?

He felt rejected by those in society. They were the enemy; pigs, establishment and materialists who worshipped houses, cars and money. (It seems I worshipped those things, too.) They were mainly composed of whites whom the blacks would rise up against. Manson's thing was to manipulate not only us, but also the blacks to carry out his anger against society. Our minds were slowly poisoned as we shared his madness.

Q: When did you realize your beliefs were wrong?

I realized my beliefs were wrong when it was too late. After the murders, my mind was racing, not knowing if what Charlie was saying was true or false. It didn't seem to be unfolding like he said it would. We'd moved to the desert and were unable to find the bottomless pit. I then began to question Manson's beliefs.

Q: How did you break away from Manson's false beliefs?

Well, there was an older man named Crockett, who was deprogramming a couple of long-standing family members in the desert. When Charlie met him, Crockett stood up against him. Manson could see that Crockett was a threat. I started to question Manson's beliefs in my head, and besides, Helter Skelter just wasn't coming down like Charlie had said it would. Eventually, I would run from Manson and the family in panic, not knowing what to believe, realizing I had made a terrible mistake.

Q: But didn't you try to go back to the family one last time?

Yes, I did! I fled to Texas to see my family, ran to Mexico and Hawaii, but still couldn't find a way to escape. So I decided to go back, walking fifty miles across the desert looking for Charlie. But at the last moment, I turned away, fearing him, and returned to Texas.

Q: Did Manson ever teach the beliefs of Friedrich Nietzsche and Adolf Hitler?

Strange as it may seem, I never heard Manson mention Nietzsche or Hitler. Again, I was away from the family for three months when Charlie laid out his take on Helter Skelter. I've heard that magazines were found in a bus we left in the desert, all having articles on Hitler and even Rommel and his Desert Corps. I faintly remember those magazines. Family members who were close to Manson during the months I was gone, knew his views on Hitler all too well. I did hear about that.

I never heard Manson give credit to anyone for his philosophy. I have wondered if Manson got his dune buggy escape-to-the-desert idea from Rommel, the German field Marshall of WWII. And Manson must have gotten the idea of those swastikas the family members carved on their foreheads during their trial from Hitler. That really surprised me as I watched from a distance in a Texas jail.

Q: Well, do you know about Manson's view concerning Nietzsche and Hitler?

Supposedly, Manson studied Nietzsche, and like Hitler, he believed in a master white race. Maybe he thought the family would become the master race after coming up from the bottomless pit. Others have said Manson felt Hitler was a tuned-in guy who had leveled the karma of the Jews. I don't know. I never heard him say that.

I do remember in the book, Helter Skelter, Vincent Bugliosi had a shocking parallel between Hitler and Manson. He wrote that both men were influenced by Nietzsche, had similar statures and wounded pasts, and were illegitimate children. Also, he stated that they were racist, both having a hatred for society, using slaves to commit their murders for them. They used repetitive programming and fear to their full advantage. With their charismatic and hypnotic eyes, Hitler and Manson could easily influence others. I find it hard to believe that Manson was emulating Hitler without my knowing it. If he was, I was just blind to it.

Q: How could you have been so blind?

I was less programmed with Manson's philosophy because I was gone for those three months. When I came back, I got caught up in the whirlwind, blindly following the fervor of the others. Two hard-core members, Brooks Poston and Paul Watkins, uncovered Manson's philosophy more than anyone. And at that time, they feared what was to come. If I had heard this crazy Nietzsche/Hitler philosophy, I think I would have taken off again myself.

I feel that Manson avoided sharing his beliefs with me in fear that I wouldn't fall for them. The Apostle Paul wrote, in 2 Corinthians 4:4, "*Satan, the god of this evil world, has blinded the minds of those who don't believe [in God]*"... (NLT). Of course, my own rebellion, disobedience and ignorance were to blame. The drugs were a stimulant making me gullible to believe what I wouldn't normally believe. This took me into a death spiral downward to greater rebellion, emotional pain, drug consumption and worldly, fleshly pleasures.

In other words, my many fears blinded me through a deadly and sinful principle. I was running from God in unbelief, conscious of my sin. The more I tried to do what was right in my own strength, the more I missed the mark. I was deceived into thinking that no one accepted me.

I felt rejected, and I believed the Manson family could satisfy my emptiness. Instead, I was propelled into deeper degradation and death.

Q: How about the beliefs of Scientology and The Process Church?

I never heard Manson mention Scientology or The Process Church. He did meet up with a Scientologist named Crockett in the desert. Crockett was instrumental in deprogramming Poston and Watkins, and stood toe-to-toe with Manson. This was the only mention of Scientology. I remember them arguing back and forth for hours.

Manson was reportedly studying Scientology in prison, and he could have been in contact with The Process Church at that time. An ex-Scientologist started the Process Church, and its members worship both Satan and Christ. I find that interesting because I felt Manson was both at times.

Q: Do you think Manson was influenced by these cults?

Maybe Manson was influenced by these, maybe not, who knows? There is a lot of evidence for it. I know he was into mind control and good at programming us with his beliefs. Some of those beliefs seem to have been very close to those of The Process Church, which is a satanic cult, preying on those who are isolated, angry and hopeless.

They were called The Church of the Final Judgment. Like Manson, they believed a chosen few would be left after the final judgment, that motorcycle gangs would help to bring it down and that Christ and Satan would come together to judge the world. They also shared a hatred for the blacks and used fear for their benefit. The Process Church even had a church symbol similar to the swastika and believed in a bottomless void. Their view of God made them a very dangerous cult.

Manson had similar teachings to all this, but he acted like everything he taught was his own personal revelation. So how all this fits together as part of the Manson cult, God only knows, and possibly Manson. One thing is sure, he never told the truth, only lies.

Q: So, it sounds like Manson took beliefs from here and there to design his own philosophy. Is that true?

That's right, he has been accused of borrowing philosophies. There's nothing new under the sun. Since the fall of man in Genesis Chapter 3, man has always desired to be God, to have the best answers for everything and to pridefully exalt himself above the stars. We see this depicted in Manson today. In short, he was deceived by Satan, who is out to steal, kill and destroy everything in his path. Manson's perverted knowledge and the demonic force behind him made him a very powerful, evil influence. He was much older and more aware; all part of the reason we were so easily entrapped by him.

Q: What similarities do you see between Manson's beliefs and those of Jim Jones, David Koresh, and Marshall Applewhite?

These charismatic leaders were lawmakers. Charlie's word was law. His law condemned us, so we tried that much harder to please him. He wrote the rules, and so did Jones, Koresh and

Applewhite. Charlie even said to Geraldo Rivera, “I make the laws. I'm the lawmaker.” All these men were lawmakers, and their laws ended in death. They all changed God's truth of right and wrong.

Although their beliefs differed greatly, the means to achieve a destructive result were the same. They all believed a lie, and were able to persuade and take their followers with them to wherever the lie dictated, including murder and suicide.

Their beliefs differed, but they had many similarities as cult leaders. They were charismatic leaders and thought they were the “chosen ones” with a great revelation or the key to a higher plane. They believed in a holy war with an end-of-the-age teaching. Their philosophies were unreliable and weird, even strange and bizarre. There was a oneness of the followers, who so wanted the philosophy to be true. There was group power and accountability. It was expected that each member give up material possessions, relationships and all earthly attachments. Weaker and stronger members were paired up. There was complete isolation, and an exchange of our real families for the cult family.

Q: How can cult leaders, such as Manson and Applewhite, convince people to blindly follow them and commit murder or suicide?

Well, cults go after weak people. In my case, I was lacking a strong identity, direction and goals. I had no spiritual meaning, no sound belief system or feeling of acceptance. I was also naïve and gullible, a people-pleaser. I was empty, lonely and angry, allowing myself to slowly be governed by my own self-will and surroundings.

Manson was a charismatic leader who slowly charmed us with lies and a warped, demonic philosophy. He filled a need for each of us until there was a deadly hold. The drugs made it easier for us to be charmed and impressed with his mystical power of sorcery. There was manipulation, mind control, hypnotic messages and a loss of critical thinking on our part, as our wills were given over to Manson. He used his music to bring family members closer to one another. This all resulted in an extreme devotion and oneness of purpose. Obedience became a badge of honor in the family.

Q: What's the difference between Manson's beliefs and what you believe today?

It's like the difference between night and day, darkness and light. As we've talked, I think you can easily see Manson's distorted beliefs. Today, my beliefs line up with mainstream Christianity. I believe that God, the Creator of the world, loved us so much that He sent Jesus Christ, His Son, to die on the cross to pay for the sins of all mankind; and that believing this, we will have eternal life. That's the simplicity of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, which I believe in and trust in for my salvation. My life is governed by a Godly vision and God's promises, regardless of the circumstances. God is in control of my life, not Manson. Manson's deception is a thing of the past.

Q: Why do others remain ardent followers of Manson today?

For many of the reasons we just talked about. Those who follow Manson today are individuals with a false or weak spiritual identity. These people need love and direction. They are

looking for something to identify with and believe, and they find acceptance with the Mansonites. Many are very insecure, angry people, blaming others for their own wrong choices. It's sad that they are blinded to the true joys of family and church relationships. We need to reach out in love rather than judge them.

I'm deeply concerned about the Marilyn Manson following that has helped make Charles Manson a hero in the eyes of some children. They attach themselves to the Manson spirit through Marilyn Manson's satanic rock band, who took his name from Charles Manson. I pray they wake up before the results become deadly. These children seem to be worshipping sex, drugs and death. We hope to reach some of them before it is too late!

Q: What would you say to or ask Manson today?

I believe he has read my book. If so, that says a lot to him. I don't think that he hears much because of his pride, but I'd let him know that I'm praying he one day will hear the truth, and humble himself to the cross of Jesus Christ.

I think I'd ask him the same questions you're asking, such as whether or not he got his philosophy from The Process Church, and where the Nietzsche/Hitler philosophy fits in. I think I could come up with a lot of questions to help put the puzzle together, but I don't think I could believe his answers. I don't think he would be truthful.

Q: Are you in touch with other former Manson family members?

No, I'm not. I do hear things about them through the media and through the grapevine, but I have no direct contact with them. Bugliosi did a great job following-up on former members in his updated version of Helter Skelter. I hear that many have become Christians and truly love the Lord. Some have died in accidents and some from natural causes. Others are in hiding, trying to go on with ordinary lives. Only a couple of the girls still follow Manson. I pray their eyes open up to the truth that is found only in Jesus Christ.

The Drugs

Q: When did you first start using drugs and what kind were they?

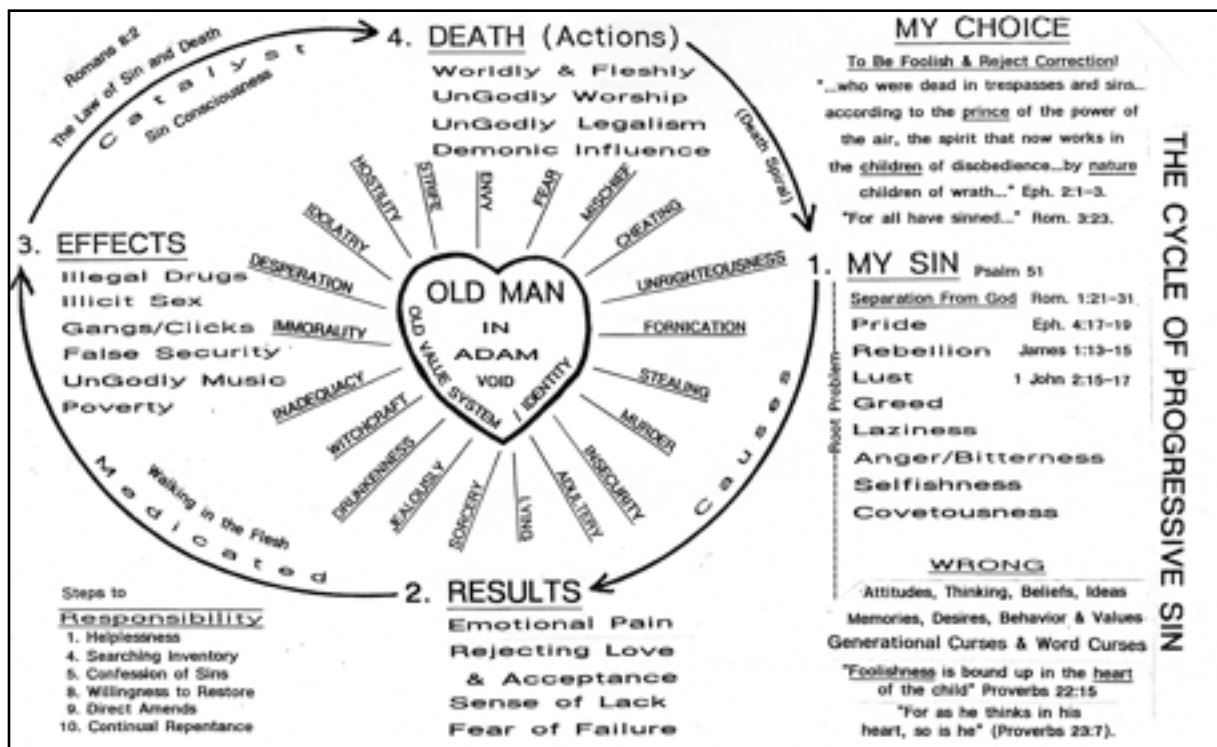
I took my first drink of alcohol at the age of fourteen. That first drink escalated to heavier drinking over the next nine years. I smoked my first marijuana joint in Dallas when I was twenty-one, before moving to California. This led to hallucinogens (psychedelic drugs) and methamphetamines for about two years, until I went to jail for murder at age twenty-three.

Q: Why did you feel the need to take drugs?

I was lacking a strong personal identity, and felt an older football team member would accept me if I drank with him. Later, drinking became the way I dealt with the pressures of school and the emotional pain I was experiencing; that is, the fear of not meeting the expectations placed upon me. Of course, this is hindsight; I didn't realize that then.

This behavior continued into college and on into my life with the Manson Family. Like me, drug users start off with light use and move to stronger drugs as their emotional pain increases.

Q: Many people relate drugs with sorcery, shamans, witchcraft, and the demonic. Do you?



The Sin Cycle

I believe drugs are a gateway to the occult. The magic arts come from the original word "pharmakia," from which we get the word pharmacy. Those involved in sorcery get high on drugs

in order to make it easier to contact demons, and they are soon possessed by them. Charles Manson is a typical example of one who became possessed by evil spirits through drugs. Today, millions of young people are in bondage to Satan through the use of drugs without even knowing it.

Most people using drugs claim there aren't any harmful effects. But drugs act as a tool to open the mind, and leave you defenseless against evil spirits entering in and taking possession. Ninety percent of those who belong to the Church of Satan started on drugs.

Q: Did Satanism play a part in the Manson family?

We didn't know it, but there was an invisible battle going on for our souls. Manson was a sorcerer, a false prophet. He was a charismatic leader who used magic, rituals and drugs to entice people and enslave their minds. We opened ourselves up to satanic power and believed there were no consequences for our actions.

As far as the actual practice of Satanism and witchcraft, we were not involved in that. Underneath though, things were being influenced by the power of spells, charms and magic. The girls did witchy things, and at least one girl, I believe, had experience with Satanism. But overall, we were not practicing it in the classical sense.

Q: Did Manson know Anton LaVey?

I do believe there has been speculation in this direction, but I never heard Manson mention LaVey. One of the girls was apparently involved with LaVey for several months. Also, one of the men had experience in Satanism. Manson could have met LaVey through them, in San Francisco.

I did find it interesting that LaVey started the San Francisco-based First Church of Satan in 1969, the year our crime was committed. He also came out with the Satanic Bible that same year.

Q: Was Manson using drugs, or were only the members using them?

I'm asked this question a lot. People seem to think that Manson had all of us drugged out, while he remained sober so he could easily manipulate our minds. This may be true, but a sorcerer such as Manson uses mind-altering drugs himself in order to contact spiritual beings, and gain supernatural powers. He was definitely using drugs like the rest of us.

He also used drugs to manipulate and control us, and the more drugs we took, the easier it was for him to manipulate us with his philosophy. We all began to reflect his views, a mirror image of destruction, growing worse every day. We mirrored his lifestyle and attitude toward society.

Q: Earlier you mentioned that alcohol was the first drug you took. Some people don't consider it a drug. Can you comment on that?

Most people don't look at alcohol as being a drug, but it is. It's one of the most dangerous drugs. There are as many alcohol-related deaths among teenagers as there are suicides.

Most of these deaths are driving related, but now we're seeing binge-drinking deaths on college campuses and the mixing of alcohol with other drugs causing death. All of this is an attempt to kill emotional pain, but they're killing themselves instead.

Like I was in the '60s, young people are filled with fears, obsessions, anxieties and feelings of inadequacy. They are saying, "I want to belong at any cost." For me, my behavior ended up destroying many lives. I regret taking my first drink. It was the start of a destructive path that separated me from the most precious people in my life, my family.

Q: How did marijuana affect your mind and actions?

I had no idea that marijuana, when smoked, quickly enters the bloodstream and acts on the brain and nervous system. It's a hallucinogen. It beats a path to the brain and accumulates in the liver. I think knowing this would help users to understand why it affects their moods and thinking. Marijuana distorts your sense of reality.

It affected me in many ways. My eyes became bloodshot, it stimulated my appetite and I became more talkative and outgoing. My mood would vary from a state of depression, to a feeling of excitement. I slowly became lazy and found it harder to make decisions that required clear thinking. Colors seemed brighter, and hearing became keener. My reflexes and thinking were definitely affected by both alcohol and marijuana. I could easily have harmed someone while driving under the influence.

Q: About the other hallucinogens you've taken, how did they affect you?

My first experience with hallucinogens involved my chewing-up rosewood seeds. In reality, I was poisoning myself with strychnine, which is found in certain plants. In small doses, it stimulates the nervous system, but these plants can kill you. I also had a near-death experience with belladonna. Children have died trying to get high on belladonna. One should stay away from these poisonous plants, as well as the new designer drugs, such as Ecstasy and Ketamine. These drugs change the chemical make-up of the brain, can cause paralysis and are linked to heart, liver and kidney damage.

These plants were two extremely bad experiences for me. I had hallucinations, illusions and delusions. I became dehydrated and even blacked out. I became uneasy and felt panic, anger and confusion. I was afraid of what I saw inside myself. I stepped into a dark, evil world where I could see the spirits of the dead. This world became threatening and I wanted to fight back. I felt this violence and rage flare up inside me. As I reflect back, I realize these drugs were turning my already emotionally disturbed world upside down. I was experiencing hallucinations, but the effect they had on my behavior was mind-boggling. That's the last time I took those.

Q: When we talk about hallucinogens, we think of LSD. Didn't LSD affect you greatly?

Yes it did, more than any other drug. I guess I was trying to understand myself better and to find a quick way to escape from reality. I didn't like myself or the way things were turning out.

LSD causes bizarre mental reactions and distortions in every physical sense — sight, touch, taste, smell and hearing. What I remember most, was having dilated pupils and the ability to see into the pores of my skin. I still don't know if what I saw in my skin was real or not. I do know that as a result, I became a vegetarian, because of what I thought I saw in my skin. LSD is not really physically addictive, but I guess I liked the psychological effects. It was a way to escape what was really going on in my mind.

Walls appeared to move, colors seemed stronger and more brilliant, with unusual patterns unfolding before my eyes. Flat objects seemed to stand out in three dimensions. My senses seemed more acute, one merging into another; for example, music appeared as colors, and colors seemed to have taste.

One of the most confusing reactions was the feeling of two strong and opposite emotions at the same time. I felt both happy and sad at once, or depressed and elated, or relaxed and tense. Sometimes I even lost the normal feeling of boundaries between body and space. There is a sensation that you can do everything better, but in reality things are done poorer than before. I did panic at times, and experienced extreme paranoia. I'm just thankful that I didn't have flashbacks from drugs. My choice to take them resulted in something far worse though; they helped ruin my life, and more than this, to destroy the lives of others.

Q: What kind of drugs were you on during your crime?

I was on methamphetamines. When I tell people that, they say, “I knew it!” It's commonly called “speed, the drug of violence” by users, and even the police, who use the term “cranker violence.” Crystal meth was blamed by one national magazine for ending San Francisco's psychedelic scene in 1969, by turning the Haight from weeds and beads to crystals and pistols. Those on the stuff tend to be very erratic and violent. They do crazy and stupid things, including murder, like I did. The choice to take this, or any drug, only ends in destruction and death.

Q: Tell me more about your moods on meth. What were the physical effects?

Methamphetamines or “speed,” affects the central nervous system. It made me feel alert and self-confident. On the other hand, it caused me to feel jittery and irritable. It made my speech unclear. Afterwards, I felt let down and depressed. What I remember most is that my emotions were dulled. I realize now that I was medicating my emotional pain, and as a result, the feelings of others meant nothing.

As far as the physical effects, my heart rate increased, my pupils dilated and my appetite disappeared. Meth is definitely physically addictive. The more you take, the more you need.

Meth is very dangerous. It exhausts you, causes mental derangement, hallucinations and even suicidal depression. It depletes chemicals in your brain that normally would allow a person to empathize with others and to control violent actions.

I snorted meth, but those who inject it with unsanitary needles can contract Hepatitis B or C, or HIV. People have also been known to die from an overdose.

Q: What part did meth play in the crimes?

I only took meth for a month, but in that short period of time, it took me over the edge. I believe it was a major contributing factor in my crime. I had been using it constantly for three weeks before the crime. During the murders, I felt like a mechanical man, a programmed machine out of control, like a malfunctioning robot unable to stop the brutality. It was like being on another planet; electricity filled the air. I was without restraint, empowered by the drug and without my normal inhibitions and personhood.

Q: Can you add to why you feel children use drugs today? And why they shouldn't?

There are several reasons why children experiment with drugs; pressure from friends is one. Children urge their friends to try drugs. Wishing to keep in good standing with their group and fearing ridicule if they refuse, they go along.

Another reason is the desire to rise above the feelings of inadequacy that are common among teens. We, as parents, must give our children recognition at home and let them know we accept them. Then they won't have a need for any drugs to medicate emotional pain and rejection.

Also, children are curious. Teenagers are inherently curious and aggressive in their desire to explore the unknown. They may have heard warnings about the dangers of drug abuse, but they have heard another side of the story too. They have heard that this is the way to immediate pleasure. Drugs are a quick way to get a euphoric high, but it's not real and only lasts until the drugs wear off.

My life should be a testimony as to why a person should not use drugs. Drugs destroy your life. There is nothing good that can come from using drugs. They destroy your future and your family, and they steal your most valuable possession — an abundant life.

Q: What can parents do to keep their children free from drugs?

The quality of the parent-child relationship has an important bearing on children's vulnerability. When a home reflects unconditional love, our children know their approval and acceptance is not based upon performance. They receive a good personal and spiritual identity as parents spend time with them in companionship. Our children then won't have the feelings of inadequacy, frustration, rebellion and anger that tempt them to experiment with drugs. They'll prefer to please God and their parents, knowing they're loved and accepted by them. They will emulate their parents' way of life, rather than giving into temptations and peer pressure.

Children who are brought up in Christian homes have greater emotional balance and stability than others. Unless there's deadly legalism in the home, they're not so prone to allow their curiosity to lead them astray. The church becomes a place not only to worship, but also to find role models and peers who are less likely to lead our children astray. They'll receive direction for discovering their gifts and talents, and help in making goals for life.

As parents who are primarily interested in our children's welfare, we must talk to them about the dangers that surround them without legalistically putting them in a box. Otherwise, they will

explode in anger, blaming their parents for making all their decisions. We must explain that the only real and safe way to live is to avoid all forms of experimentation with chemicals or drugs. Even glue sniffing can have a damaging effect on the liver, kidneys and brain. Some children have died from sniffing or “huffing” glue.

Q: What do you say to people who think it's okay to use drugs in moderation?

It's practically impossible to continue using drugs in moderation. Alcohol and marijuana are the first steps on a ladder that can lead quickly to more dangerous drugs, such as LSD, methamphetamines and heroin. I'd suggest a person thinking he or she can take drugs in moderation seek help immediately!

Q: What can we do to war against drugs?

We must demonstrate to those around us that there are better and more lasting ways to experience variety and depth, and the richness and fullness of life than by ingesting psychoactive chemicals. I believe this fullness is found in a personal relationship with Jesus Christ. The momentary euphoric high on drugs does not compare with God's love, light and life dwelling in our hearts. This truth is “caught” by our children, more than “taught.”

We need to be good listeners. Our children need God's love, righteousness, peace and joy demonstrated to them, not our anger. A person considering drug use needs someone to listen to their problems, someone who knows what they're talking about. Few things make a young person a candidate for the “drug scene” faster than adults who won't take time to listen.

Drug abuse is a symptom, merely the tip of the iceberg. We must be able to get to the root cause. When our children turn to marijuana and LSD, are they out for “kicks”? Rebelling against the system? Surrendering to peer pressure? Suffering from the frustration of life? Under the tensions of academic competition? All these were part of my iceberg.

I needed help, but I kept telling myself that the answer to my pain was drugs. As a result, my twisted life destroyed the lives of many others. I abhor what I did and how I brought unbearable pain to their loved ones. I can never undo my past. And oh, how I wish I could! I pray that many will learn from my life that using drugs is a dead-end road.

The Music

Q: What part does music play in society?

It has been said that music is a reflection of the heart and soul of man. Musicians reflect what they see, think and feel, passing these feelings on to the listener who identifies with the musician's heart. Lyrics depict what is real or fantasy and what's true or make-believe. It becomes a composition of thought, feelings and movements — a physical expression of the heart. We see music combined with drugs and dance, replacing God's powerful presence and joyful expression of praise. What God intended to be an expression of thanksgiving, praise and worship becomes a symphony to the world, the flesh and the devil.

Q: Are you saying that God and Satan both have music?

Yes, and various degrees in between. We must look at the spirit behind the music, good or bad, holy or demonic, and honestly evaluate how it influences our lives. We become what we listen to!

We must ask ourselves, “Who is in control?” We can either let God's truth and promises control our lives, or self-will, circumstances, people and events. The forces of darkness would have us do the latter.

We were created to have a relationship with God and to worship Him just as the angels do. But Lucifer, the once-anointed cherub now called Satan, brought one-third of the angels with him to Earth, influencing mankind.

Satan's jealousy rages because he knows we were created in God's image of glory and honor, and he was not. He knows we were created to worship God alone. He lures and tempts us in every conceivable way to worship him. His purpose is to steal, kill and destroy our lives with his music, dance and self-gratifications.

The assignment of those fallen angels, or demons, is to persuade us to worship Satan and rebel against God, our parents and society. One of their prime tools for this is sensuous music that appeals to our fleshly instincts.

I'd suggest that everyone check out the book of Psalms in the Holy Bible. God's music is an expression of our total surrender to Him, an expression of worship and of His great worth. It's an expression of our love for God, who sent Jesus Christ to cleanse us from wickedness and place us in right standing with Himself.

Q: How did the music of the '60s reflect what was going on then?

Musicians were like prophets or sorcerers calling on the spirits for answers. I was looking for direction, personal identity and answers. So, I'd listen to the Stones, the Doors, Cream, Country Joe, Jimmy Hendrix, Janis Joplin, Dylan, Richie Havens, the Beatles and others. It seemed like they knew what was going on in a crazy, drug-induced world. The Psalmist said, “*They that make idols are like unto them, so is every one that trusts in them*” (Psalm 115:8).

My hip friends were all too eager to interpret the music. I thought the musicians could identify with my situation. The Stones sang about not getting any satisfaction and the way to find it was by having a banquet with Lucifer. I certainly had no satisfaction and if it meant worshipping Satan to get it, I was willing. I was certainly desperate and looking for answers in all the wrong places, but in reality I was calling on evil spirits for help and power, instead of God.

Each group seemed to offer some sort of hope, and we'd hang onto every word, listening to everyone but our parents. As I reflect back, I see there was no life in the music. The country was in a bad state with the Vietnam War, and death was in the air, even on the airwaves. When Jim Morrison, Jimmy Hendrix and Janis Joplin died, it was like God died; we felt a loss of hope, and it seemed we were a little closer to the eve of destruction. These guys were our idols. We worshipped them.

I was blinded to the fact that Hendrix really was into voodoo, even though I sang his song “Voodoo Child” right along with him. He said, “Music is a spiritual thing of its own. You can hypnotize with music, and when you get people at their weakest point, you can preach into the subconscious what you want to say.”

Q: Did the music influence you in a negative way?

Well, it certainly didn't influence me in a positive way. These musicians were, like me, looking for answers in drugs, rebelling against parents and society and living in sexual immorality — each one related to the other. They sang about love, peace and freedom; all the things I was lacking. I was caught up in rebellion, searching in all directions, but in unbelief toward God; especially my parents' God. I believe music was one of the influences that helped me dishonor my father and mother.

I was under the influence of the same drugs that influenced the musicians. This made it easier to identify with them, and it made what they were singing about more believable; the music had an even greater influence over my mind and took me into what seemed to be a magical world. This world was a very simple, but complicated, lazy, do-nothing world of emptiness, where demons were free to run through my mind. I mention demons a lot because it is so important that we understand their reality. They are Satan's helpers from the unseen spiritual realm of darkness.

Q: How do you see today's children being influenced by music?

Simply the appearance, the dress and rebellious actions of children who are into rock music tells us they are being influenced by and have given ground to the enemy of their soul. It hurts to hear the rebellious nature of some of today's music blaspheme Jesus Christ.

This is the same prideful rebellion that Lucifer exhibited in heaven. The Scripture says, “... *rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft...*” Witchcraft involves exposing oneself to the realm and power of Satan's control.

It's easy to get hooked and fall prey to sensuous thoughts, which lead to rebellion against parents, and to a rebellious appearance. Children imitate the “look” of rock bands — fishnet

stockings on arms, white face paint, black lipstick, spiked jackets, and pentagram jewelry. They have been known to “cast spells” over other students. Is there any doubt who they are worshipping? Marilyn Manson, a self-proclaimed antichrist, is trying to take the place of Christ in their lives while burning crosses on stage.

Satan is out to capture the minds of our youth. Kip Kinkel, the 15-year-old student from Springfield, Oregon who killed his parents and two students and wounded twenty-four, was influenced by music. He started dressing in black and stopped talking to people. He took on the pose of a “Gothic,” a youth persona with music and style, gloomy and dark. Kip ended up with a sentence of 112 years in prison. The “Trench Coat Mafia” killers at Columbine were also influenced by the violent lyrics in music. So very sad.

Q: Are you comparing some of today's music to witchcraft?

Indeed I am! Some music can bring a person into the realm and under the power of Satan's control; it encourages drug use, rebellion and immorality. The rock beat showed up in the southern United States in the '50s with rock ‘n roll. Many believe this beat originates from witch doctors who worship and call up evil spirits with their music, causing demons to enter into people. As a result, we see the same dance, dress and symbols in village-worship rituals exhibited by some groupies. Most people don't realize they're into demonic witchcraft.

The rebellious nature of witchcraft is not only propagated through music. For instance, research reveals that the Harry Potter series of sorcery books, movies and other paraphernalia invading our land, is not just fantasy or a world of make believe. The subtle and overt messages of the occult are woven within each adventure of a young wizard, who lies, steals and takes revenge.

The material used in the Potter books results from years of research of occult history and practices. The author claims her world of wizardry is a “world of imagination” and a “moral world.” These practices are affecting the hearts of millions of children, who are being drawn toward Potter-mania.

The prophet Isaiah found the children of Israel scoffing at God, saying, “...*let the counsel of the Holy One of Israel draw nigh and come, that we may know it!* [God said,] “*Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness; that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter!*” (Isaiah 5:19b, 20).

Regardless of which avenue witchcraft slithers in, remember, our true enemies are the spiritual forces of darkness. “*For we are not fighting against people made of flesh and blood, but against the evil rulers and authorities of the unseen world, against those mighty powers of darkness who rule this world, and against wicked spirits in the heavenly realms*” (Ephesians 6:12, NLT).

Q: What do you suggest as a positive influence on our children today?

Parents are to be the primary influence, but there's a real war being waged against the family. One of Satan's weapons of opposition is the rebellious nature of music. Musicians can sow rebellion and strife between parents and their children, so the parents are no longer an effective influence.

Many parents are at a loss for answers as they see their children becoming involved in immoral habits and illegal activities. At the same time, the children are plagued with increasingly violent and unclean thoughts.

Parents and children alike must admit they're powerless in themselves. They must admit that their family has become unmanageable, and that God can restore sanity to their lives. They must make a decision to turn their family over to the care of God. The Lord must be the positive influence for our children. He has won the war against the devil, and He gave us victory at the cross, but we must trust Him. His love at Calvary never fails to be effective in our lives.

Q: If music were about religion, God and nothing else, would the youth listen to it?

Whether the youth listen to Christian music or not, we need to encourage them by example, praising and worshipping God. This is what will bring true love, peace and joy to their lives and families. On the contrary, to some, music does exactly the opposite. The beat appeals to the body and ties young people to the rock culture and its way of life.

Only the Lord can open the eyes of the youth to the destructive, evil nature of certain music. Christian music is certainly a positive influence on our youth, and they do listen to it. Some of it is a little too rock-like for me, and except for the lyrics I can't hear any difference between it and rock 'n' roll. I don't believe Christian musicians have to copy secular music's beat to attract listeners. Most contemporary Christian music is uplifting, and the musicians are good role models for our youth.

Q: Does music stimulate the appetite for drug use?

It certainly does. Drugs, rebellion, immorality and rock music all fit into the same package. I can tell you from experience, each is culturally related to the other. I was addicted to rock music just as I was addicted to drugs. The more drugs and music I took in, the more drugs and music I needed. I became hooked, out of control and was in total rebellion against God and my parents.

I recently read an article where the American Medical Association said that heavy metal music may be associated with drug use, premarital sex and satanic rites. They also reported that the average teenager listens to over 10,000 hours of rock music between the 7th and 12th grades. It's clear who is influencing our children.

Q: If there was no such thing as music, would this be a better world?

No, God created music. His music assures us of His love for us, and is a form of worship to Him. On the other hand, there are temptations in this life, and things we worship more than God. Some of these include drugs, sex and rock 'n' roll. God's greatest joy comes from His seeing our thanksgiving, praise and worship expressed in love to Him. He alone is worthy; for He delivered us out of darkness and into His marvelous light through Jesus Christ. The Psalms tell us that God dwells in the praises of His people. As we praise Him, He fills us with His presence. Worship to our God is what makes this a better world. He is the Rock that doesn't roll.

I'm not saying that all non-Christian music is demonic. There's a lot of music in this world that is not Christian and not destructive. We're not talking about getting rid of all music that isn't Christian-based. If you can sense the music's destructive nature, it's evil. Some music may not take you anywhere but to the same old, lonely, low-level plane you're living in. But good music will encourage you, lift you up and give you hope.

Two tragic examples have occurred recently. In July, 2012, a gunman shot and massacred dozens of people in a movie theater in Aurora, Colorado. The gunman was reported to have been listening to violent hard rock music for months prior to the shootings. He even left the stereo at his apartment set to turn on with the volume set on high at the time of the shootings, in an attempt to lure police into setting off booby traps he had left. The music that was set to play on the stereo was violent, alternative rock.

In August, 2012, a gunman committed mass killings at a Sikh Temple in Oak Creek, Wisconsin. This gunman was described in the August 7, 2012 edition of USA Today as a “neo-Nazi musician.” Mark Potok, a senior fellow at the Southern Poverty Law Center in Montgomery, Alabama stated, “The lyrics to the songs these bands sing could not be printed in any newspaper in this country. They are incredibly vile. They call for the murder of all Jews and all black people. When we say it is hate music, we’re not kidding.”

One cannot say that everyone who listens to such music will commit terrible murders, but we can see that most everyone who commits such terrible mass killings was into some sort of violent, hate-filled, alternative music. It is never reported that someone was heard listening to “Amazing Grace” over and over again, and this led them to commit mass murder.

Q: Do you think “rating” music to keep the youth from its influence is a good idea?

Definitely! Music should be rated, but by whom? As Christians, we are to live close to God so that we can help our children judge between good and evil. We should be able to determine what draws us closer to God and one another, and what hinders our deepest need — meaningful relationships.

Maybe non-Christians need the government to help rate their morals, sort of like the law in the Old Testament, showing them their sinfulness and their need for God. But it's the heart of man that needs to change. We must take charge of our own lives, and allow God's standards to rule. Righteousness cannot be legislated. It comes from a heart made righteous through making Jesus LORD.

Q: Marilyn Manson was raised in a Christian home. What happened to him?

That's what I hear, but I really don't know how he was raised. Regardless, he rebelled against his parents, wanting attention, and saw a way to get it while making money at the same time. It's a shame he has to drag so many into rebellion with him. For those who don't know, Marilyn Manson took his band's name from Marilyn Monroe's first name and Charles Manson's last.

As parents, we can't just blame a musician like Marilyn Manson; we have the obligation to be there for our children. We need to look for warning signs before our children become violent. If

we don't raise them, someone will be there to raise them for us. That someone most likely will not have their welfare in mind, but will offer them acceptance and every temptation for their harm and destruction.

Maybe Marilyn Manson didn't have problems at home or have to raise himself, like lots of children do. Still, personal conflicts came along that he didn't know how to deal with, and now we see his outrageousness.

Our children need someone with whom to confide and to discuss positive alternatives. They must be nurtured and have early prevention when necessary. They must not only be taught and modeled right values, but made to feel loved with a sense of security and acceptance.

Q: What part did Charles Manson's music play in the family?

The purpose of Manson's music was to manipulate or indoctrinate his listeners to accept his philosophies and beliefs. His music had a very real demonic influence on the family members and still has today to those who choose to listen to it.

I've identified him previously as a sorcerer, a charismatic leader who used magic. He played the mediator between the family and the evil world, out to charm or cast a spell with chants through music. This was one key to his manipulation; another was the use of drugs. We'd already given ourselves to the spirit of rebellion prior to joining him, so we were ripe for his philosophy.

We saw his magic as love, but in reality he taught rebellion and the way of death. He'd make up new songs with lyrics such as, "...close the bathroom door stupid," mocking our parents. Although my parents never said that, I heard their voice in other ways and was reminded of my anger toward them, confirming my need and love for Charlie. As we felt more and more rejected by our parents, he became our answer for unconditional love and acceptance. His voice became greater than that of our parents, and our personal consciences. It was a subtle, consuming confusion. We slowly gave the demons authority over our beliefs so they could control and destroy us.

Let me try to explain how his music was used as a chant to charm us. In a ritualistic Manson worship ceremony, our whole bodies vibrated with his sound. We'd sit in a circle, surrounded by his offbeat guitar strum, on drugs, swaying and sometimes even dancing to his tune — being enticed into his web. His musical chants were repetitive lyrics and pitches that produced a hypnotic effect or a trance-like state. His words filled the air — "Cease to exist, come say you love me...kill your ego, die" — so once you ceased to be, you could be free to totally love, totally come together, and totally give yourself over to his demonic thoughts. Unbeknownst to us, a spell was cast and the demons were summoned and free to emotionally consume us.

Q: Did his music suggest violence against society?

I believe his music reflects his pain and anger toward the lack of a parental relationship and therefore, hatred toward society. The many years he spent in prison gave him plenty of time to develop this hatred and hostility, blaming everyone else but himself.

The spontaneous songs he sang in the confines of the family spewed forth this hatred, different from what he later released for public consumption. He considered society as pigs and felt they were going to get what they had coming. We not only took on his beliefs, but also his anger. Helter Skelter became the theme of every song he wrote; a violent revolution, a bloody conflict between whites and blacks.

Q: If music were less violent, would people be less violent?

It's pretty common knowledge that people who look and listen to violence will become violent themselves. Children who are not emotionally mature and have not developed a sound conscience are especially vulnerable.

Heavy metal groups perform while their listeners ritualistically stomp in a circle, maiming and even killing one another. Oui is white-supremacy music, which encourages its listeners toward violence. Gangster-rap musicians say they're only singing about their neighborhoods, but in reality they're propagating a violent gangster-lifestyle message to youngsters who go out and do what they sing about.

This is all part of the violent spell that's being cast upon society by musicians, who take no responsibility for their actions. But as parents, we are responsible to keep this music from the ears of our children so its venom will not affect them. There is a battle going on against the family, the very foundation of society. This is why we must call on God's strength and wisdom to be nurturing parents.

Q: You've talked about the Beatles' music being part of Manson's false beliefs. Can you explain?

That's right! Manson went so far as to tell the prosecuting attorney that the Beatles' music and LSD were responsible for the Tate-LaBianca murders. He takes no responsibility for his delusional thinking or false beliefs. I gave myself to his unsound reasoning and was deceived, but responsibility for my crimes is mine. Without it how can I repent? The Beatles' music and drugs cannot be blamed.

Manson was obsessed with the Beatles. In a bizarre and unreal fashion, he hinged his philosophy on every word they sang. "Helter Skelter" became his black and white race war. But in reality, it was an amusement park ride in England. "Sexy Sadie" fit one of the girls in the family, Susan Atkins, to a T. Charlie thought the lyrics of the song "Honey Pie" meant the Beatles were calling him to England to make an album. The song "Piggies" described the establishment who needed a "...damn good wacking." The lyrics of "Revolution 1" told Charlie that it was time for Armageddon. To him, the Beatles were the "four angels" of Revelation 9 from the Bible, and they were saying, "Helter Skelter is coming down fast," and he was to instigate it.

The drugs, and the hallucinations they created, made his false interpretations seem real. That's the scary part. It goes to show you that people will easily believe a lie if their lives are not founded upon a sound belief system.

Q: Was the Beatles' music violent?

Manson perceived their music as calling for violence, but he was really stretching it. For instance, he believed that he was the 5th angel of Revelation 9 and that the Beatles' song, "Revolution 9," was calling the black race to rise up and cause Helter Skelter, a bloody race war. This song had the sound of machine gun fire and warfare, as well as screams, crying babies, BBC announcers and according to Manson, secret messages.

He told us that the repetition of the chant "number nine, number nine" in the song, referred to Revelation 9 of the Bible and that he had the key to the Bottomless Pit, even maps. The locusts represented the Beatles, "...their faces like men...hair like women," and "breastplates of iron" were their electric guitars. To Manson, the horsemen of Chapter 9 represented motorcycle and dune-buggy gangs, an army of chariots spreading destruction upon all who didn't have the "seal of God." It all seemed to fit; the end of the world was near, but as part of the chosen race, the family would escape to the safety of the Pit. The way that he figured it, the blacks and the motorcycle gangs would work together to bring down Helter Skelter. This shows the bizarre twist to his madness.

Q: Are you saying that what's being perceived by the listeners in the music lyrics determines its influence?

Yes, perception is everything, especially for children who haven't formed sound belief and value systems, nor developed a strong conscience. We have the freedom to choose our belief system, but when those beliefs harm other people, those beliefs are wrong. When people believe in a delusion like Manson's, with deadly results, it is wrong. People can believe in spaceships, but when those beliefs cause thirty-nine people to commit suicide, it is wrong. There are convictions such as faith, family and freedom that we should be willing to die for, but not for a devilish lie.

Music is definitely having an influence. We can see it in the youth's dress, facial appearance, throwaway lives and immoral lifestyles. The sad part is that today our children don't have to misinterpret music for it to be harmful. The lyrics drip with violence and witchcraft. For instance, "I Love the Dead," "Dead Meat," "Decapitate," "Voodoo," "Die Young," and "Children of the Grave" are all songs with deadly, ghoulish, gory lyrics, and deadly results.

There are still cults today that use heavy-metal rock music to persuade and influence their followers. The leader uses the music to bring the followers into oneness of mind and purpose. If the leaders' intentions are violent and destructive, they will be passed on to those who choose to follow.

Q: Isn't it a person's background and psychological makeup that determines how they will perceive and react to the music?

I believe a person must be grounded spiritually. That is, grounded Biblically, with a sound identity in the cross of Jesus Christ. Without spiritual identity, a person can be easily deceived, as Manson's followers were with his weird philosophy. Also, I think perception has a great deal to do with parental influence and the environment in which children are raised. My turning to sin by

disobeying my parents caused my rebellious heart to embrace many wrong thoughts, attitudes, ideas and beliefs.

I had a distorted worldview made up of wrong perceptions concerning life. Manson filled a need for every family member depending on the individual's makeup. Drugs were a catalyst to make us more suggestible and agreeable. We were all isolated together on a “magical mystery tour,” hungry for unconditional love and overcoming our fears. Yet we were paranoid, rebellious and angry. Manson's demonic and repetitive teachings, immoral philosophy, superior awareness and charismatic leadership all combined for our deception. So I'm not saying it was only the music, but music did play a major part in the deadly philosophy.

Q: If music is so influential, is there any such thing as safe music?

Yes, there is safe music, but let me be quite clear. Some music can have a dangerous and harmful influence. The youth today are at risk. As parents, we are responsible for teaching our children to guard their lives from the threat of certain kinds of music.

The musicians are going to produce music that brings the listener into personal intimacy with them. I do believe there are warning signs to guard against. These include vulgar, rebellious lyrics, and heavy, sensuous breathing and sighing into the microphone. Also avoid music that stimulates erotic movements and high volume levels that block out personal conscience. Stay away from satanic symbols, music that glorifies self, and generally, music that has a rebellious, driving beat.

Let's face it, *“As a man thinks in his heart, so is he”* (Proverbs 23:7). This tells me that if we allow our children to listen to it, they will become like it. I know my old life was influenced by it greatly. There's a new song in the air for me — really good vibrations.

The Lord has given us a way to come into His safety. For this reason, we have been given music that is distinctively different from worldly music. This music glorifies God by being clean and pure, thus building up our lives. How much safer could we be — praising and worshipping God for our redemption and deliverance?

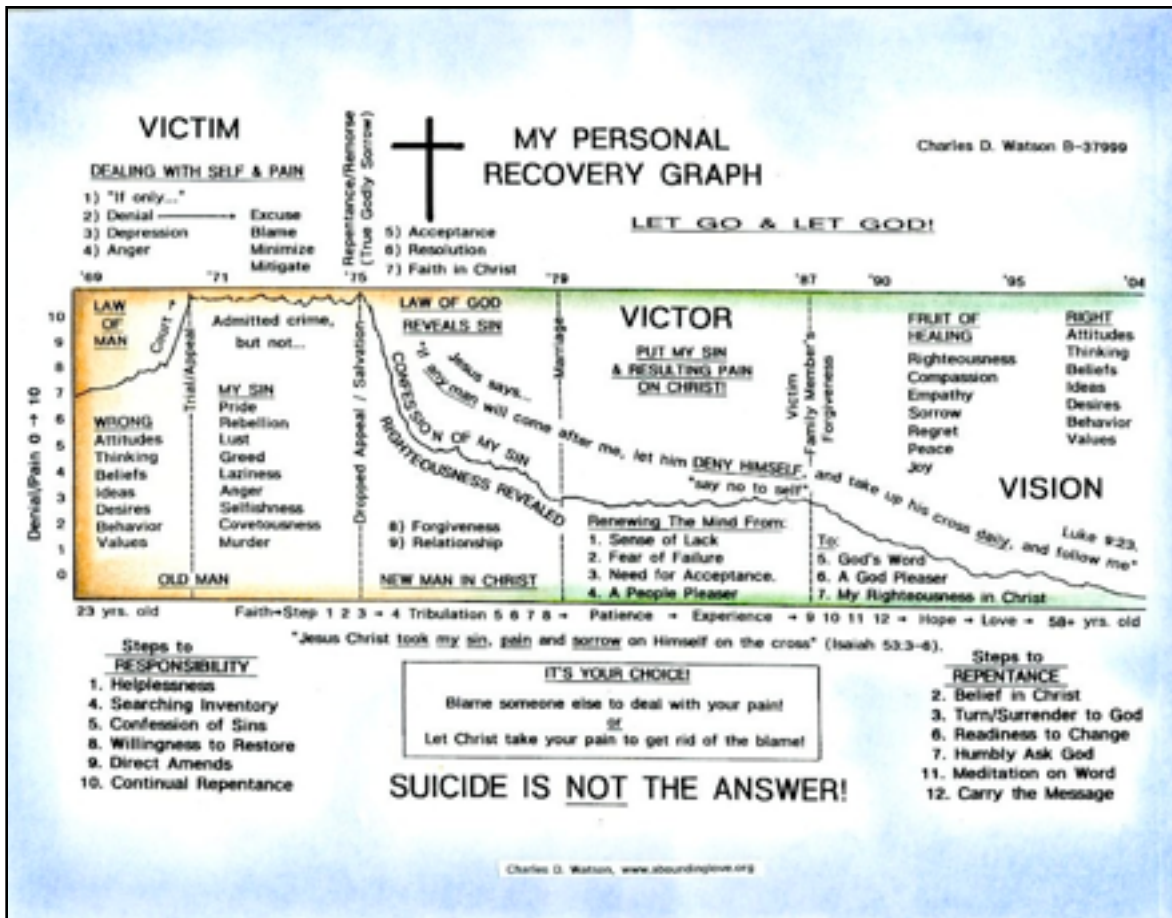
Q: What kind of music do you listen to today?

I listen to a lot of Christian radio, mostly praise-and-worship and contemporary Christian music, in that order. I live to stay in the presence of God, and in His presence is fullness of joy. This joy is my strength to live and overcome the pressures of life. I can't live successfully without worshipping God moment by moment.

The bottom line — we're not to give place to the devil. He's our enemy and he's on the loose; out to kill, steal and destroy our lives. We've been given power over him in Christ. At the cross, Jesus Christ forgave our sins, defeated the works of the devil and conquered death. Through our faith in His victory, we rule our lives in Christ. As we stay built up in the most holy faith, our desires change. This world's music has nothing to offer us any longer, because we are marching to a different drummer, playing a different tune. So, frankly, I stay in tune with God, and his music helps me to do so!

The Crime

Q: Charles, let's talk about the crime. Is that going to be difficult for you?



Personal Recovery Graph

In many ways it's more difficult to talk about the crime today than it was forty years ago. I've learned to deal properly with the pain of what I have done, and not just medicate it with mind-altering drugs. I now have compassion for the pain of others. Just thinking about my horrible, evil actions toward my victims causes great pain. I only have peace in knowing God's grace. His forgiveness makes it easier to be honest and transparent. I've learned how to place my pain and sorrow upon Christ and His cross, where it belongs. He came to take our pain and grief. I thank God for His unspeakable mercy toward me!

Q: Talking about honesty, haven't you always admitted your part in the crimes?

That's right. At the trial, I confessed to my part in the murders. But over the years, thanks to God, I've become more honest with myself no longer denying and minimizing the responsibility for my actions. When sharing my testimony, I feel it is important to share my thoughts concerning those vices I indulged in, without blaming them for my actions. Also, I now look at the crime through the eyes of others, rather than just my own. In my book, *Will You Die For Me?* I discuss the murders in depth.

Q: How did you feel the day between the Tate and LaBianca murders and shortly afterward?

I'm ashamed to say it, but I didn't have a lot of feelings. My conscience had become hardened because of my own rebellion. My feelings were dulled through the effects of drugs. But I did have some feelings; more than I admitted to Manson. I was supposed to be without feelings according to Manson's teachings, but in reality, my feelings were all mixed up. I was depressed, downhearted, spiritless and even disoriented during the crime and afterward. I remember sitting in a dry creek bed by myself. I couldn't believe it was me doing what I was doing. I just wanted it to stop, but I felt pressure to go along the next night. I remember thinking as we drove around, "Please don't let Charlie find a house to do the same thing in."

Q: Didn't you make up a lie to tell Manson, so he wouldn't demand more murders?

Yes, I did. I thought Manson was going to ask us to commit more murders. I was convinced he would've continued the murders until Helter Skelter started, and I just couldn't do it again.

The same friend who I went to live with for 3 months when I ran away from Manson, called the ranch where the Manson family was living, saying my mom had called, all worried, looking for me. I told Manson that I had called my mom in Texas and that the F.B.I. had come to my parents' home accusing me of murder. As a result, that lie stopped the killing, and he sent us all to the desert. I was so relieved.

Q: What were your feelings for the victims?

Over the years, my feelings for others had diminished. I was selfish and self-seeking, but never thought of murdering anyone. The night of the murders, I tried to medicate my pain with methamphetamines, but actually, it made it easier to turn my rebellion, fear and anger loose on my victims. Anyone outside the family had become the establishment, pigs — it was us and them. My life had come to mean nothing, so everyone's life meant nothing. Death lost its meaning since the end of the world was near. I had no emotional attachments with my victims, whom I had never met. Yet, during the murders, I remember conflicting feelings would arise in a flash, but were overcome because Manson's law was greater than my conscience. He promised us a life free of fear and judgment.

Q: Didn't you have second thoughts about committing murder?

Yes, I did. From the moment Manson gave us the orders, I began to have second thoughts. How would I carry this out? As I drove to the crime scene, the girls and I were silent and almost frozen. Our thoughts were in turmoil and we got lost for an hour. But once we got to the house, it was like all our anger against those who had caused us so much fear in life, came out all at once.

The meth sped up my thoughts and moved me ahead of my feelings. My actions even got ahead of me. What I was to do overloaded my mind. I was possessed with Manson's thoughts and the thought of pleasing him, so much so, that his voice was like a recording playing through my brain.

Q: What were you thinking and feeling right when the murders were taking place?

The girls and I didn't enjoy murdering our victims. It was insanely difficult for us all, but our slavish hearts were committed. We wanted this outbreak of violence to be over with. We felt we had to do it. We wanted to get it done and leave. It was horrific, and no way were we going to go to a second or third house, even though Manson had ordered it.

There were no thoughts of concern for the victims. There was a total disregard for life. I was concerned with destroying everyone and not getting discovered. In some ways, punishment escaped my mind since Helter Skelter was coming down and society, as we knew it, was coming to an end.

An overriding thought was, "I'm the devil, and I'm here to do the devil's work," and that's what I told my second victim. I had given myself to a very dark, demonic and evil power, and now it was being released all at once. As evidenced by the murders, it was a very destructive power driving me to violence.

Q: Do you think you were possessed by the devil?

Possessed? I don't know, but I was definitely influenced by the power of sorcery. I'm not saying, "The devil made me do it," or that Manson made me do it; but there were powerful demonic influences that I had given myself to. I was totally out of control.

We were living in demon territory. As we took drugs, the door was opened wide for them to enter us. I believe we took on their power without even knowing it. It was demonstrated by the very words from my mouth.

Q: Was Manson pleased with the murders?

Manson was never pleased. He always wanted more from us. He knew that we had never been able to please anyone in our lives and that we'd do anything to please him. He was our god. It's too bad that we didn't know the true God and that He is the only one we must truly please.

Manson said that the murders were too messy and that there was too much panic. He said he'd show us how to do it right the next night. I think we all dreaded that — I know I did. He was the only one excited about the murders. I think he also enjoyed the power that he held over us. My heart was sickened. After the murders, I remember saying, "What have I done?"

Q: You said Manson thought the murders were too messy. Can you elaborate on that?

The first night of murders was total panic. Manson's idea was to keep the victims totally calm before they were killed. This gives you some insight into the extremely evil and calculating heart of Manson. And sure enough, on the second night, he went along to keep the victims calm.

It's not easy for me to talk about or to read about the actual murders as portrayed in my book, *Will You Die For Me?* The facts of my book were taken from tape recordings I did with my attorney only four months after the crime. These recordings were very accurate descriptions of the crime, play-by-play. It's very painful for me as I recall destroying so many lives. I detest what I

did. As I think about it, I get angry with myself. Only by the grace of God have I been able to overcome the guilt.

Q: How long after the crime was it before you were arrested, and what was going through your mind during that time?

It was four months — the longest, most tormenting four months of my life. We had gone to Death Valley as a result of my telling Manson that the F.B.I. was looking for me. I was afraid he would order more murders. At the same time, I finally felt accepted into the family, but I also felt some of the family members were actually afraid of me now.

As time passed in the desert, I became more and more confused. We couldn't find the Bottomless Pit spoken of in Revelation, we ran out of drugs, and the law seemed to be closing in on us. Two park rangers had started asking questions, so Charlie ordered them killed. He felt they'd show up at an old run-down cabin the next day, so he left me there with a shotgun overnight to wait for them. I knew I wasn't going to kill them, so the next morning I took off in an old pickup and ran from Charlie. I drove the truck as far as it would go. I hitchhiked to the city, called my parents for money and flew to Texas.

Q: What was it like to commit such a horrible crime and then go back home to Texas?

I couldn't believe what I had done. I became even more confused. I began to question Manson's beliefs. Helter Skelter was not happening, and it was hard to believe that Texas was still the same. The only helter-skelter happening there was in my mind. I didn't know which was stranger — the Manson family or my family. It was like being suspended between two worlds. I just wanted the whole Manson world, what I had done, and where I had been, to not be real. Unable to erase the thoughts, I went into a deep depression.

Q: What did your parents think, and how did you relate to them?

My mother took me to the doctor. All I wanted to do was lie around in the dark. I ate very little. My mind was in turmoil as thoughts of Manson's and my family's beliefs came into conflict. I felt Manson was wrong and that I had done the wrong thing. I didn't know what was true, but I did know that there was a sick feeling in my gut. I would lash out at my parents in anger. In my heart, I blamed them for expectations of me that were too great, which I felt caused me to leave Texas in the first place. I was angry with myself for making such a grave mistake and for being in that situation.

I felt deceived, and I felt a need to run, fearing the law would be looking for me soon. I took money from my parents and flew to Mexico and then to Hawaii. There was no place to hide from what I had done. Changing locations didn't change what I had done or the real me — my heart. I left Hawaii and tried to get back to Charlie by walking miles through the desert, only to turn back when I got to within five miles of where I'd left him. I returned to Texas instead. Nothing had changed, I was still depressed. I couldn't forget what I had done, and my heart was in turmoil even after traveling thousands of miles. There was no place to hide, and I wasn't emotionally strong enough to keep running.

Q: Were you really running from Manson, or what you had done?

I was running from what I had done. Manson wasn't after me, but his beliefs were attacking my mind. I was running from the thought of the murders. I could see myself committing them in living color, and it was ugly. I tried to distance myself from it, but I couldn't. I was carrying it around inside me. I was tormented by the thought of it. So the easiest way to deal with what I had done was to deny that it was real.

When I hear of crimes committed today and the offenders say they can't remember it, I know they're lying. No matter how many drugs they were on, or how many demons had hold of them, they can remember it. They just don't want to remember, simply because it's too horrible. Besides, it seems to be a good defense to say they can't remember. I could remember it all too well.

Q: Did you understand the magnitude of your crime?

I knew I had done something very horrible, but I was trying to put it out of my mind. On the run, I didn't hear the news and remember seeing a newspaper article on the crime only once. I just wanted to run away. I didn't begin to realize the magnitude of the crime until they came looking for me in Texas. That's when I turned myself in. I couldn't run from it any longer. It was almost a relief. The fear of being caught subsided, but the shame and guilt of the crime had just begun.

Q: How long was it before you truly became remorseful?

We told Manson that during the crimes, we had no remorse. That was what he wanted to hear, but it didn't take long for me to feel remorseful once his influence and the drugs wore off.

There are different depths of remorse. The Bible says, *"For God can use sorrow in our lives to help us turn away from sin and seek salvation. We will never regret that kind of sorrow. But sorrow without repentance is the kind that results in death"* (2 Corinthians 7:10, NLT). I felt distress and a sense of guilt from the beginning, but my denial was too great for me to experience deep remorse. I was no longer killing my pain with drugs, but instead, I started blaming others, making excuses and mitigating my actions. I learned this well during my trial and while on appeals. We came up with every extenuating circumstance in the book. During my first few years in prison, I wanted to put the crime behind me. When flashes of it came up in my mind, I turned them off because the pain was too intense. But eventually, I saw that my unwillingness to think about my crime prevented me from experiencing the proper feelings for what I had done.

Q: How did you handle the pain you were experiencing?

The suffering I had caused was too great to look at without God's help. I needed strength to look at my victims' pain. I read *Helter Skelter* from cover to cover, along with the Bible. It was similar to the law of God showing me my wickedness and my need for Him. I had a picture book in my mind of the crime and the voices of my victims' last words. By this time, I had asked Christ to come into my life, and it was easier to look at everything knowing He had forgiven me. I began to see my victims as people, and that I had shattered the lives of their families. I experienced their

pain as much as I could through what I was reading about them, to the point of many tears. One thing became very clear: until I was able to deal with my own pain, I could never understand the pain of my many victims and their families.

The Lord showed me my sin and my sickness to a point of great shame and guilt. He showed me the enormous value of life and how He hated what I had done. At the same time, He showed me how He loved me, had forgiven me, and had a new identity for me. His forgiveness is what made it possible for me to be honest with myself and others about my past.

Q: Do you think the crime would have been committed if you weren't on drugs?

It's big news today that drugs, especially methamphetamines, bring out the worst in people. I spoke with a man recently whose father knew Hitler. He shared how Bayer, a German pharmaceutical company made meth in the late '30s. He told how Hitler abused it. He became so paranoid that he and a few men killed his body guards, thinking they were out to kill him. Meth was part of the German army's ration kit. It has been called "the drug of violence." I can testify as to the violence.

By no means do I blame my crime on drugs. I voluntarily got high on meth, deadening what feelings I had at the time of my crime. I do think that without the drugs, my conscience would have checked me, and together with the girls, we would have decided that what we were about to do was hideous and insane. The drugs took us over the edge and took the hesitation out of what we were ordered to do. They were definitely a large part of the driving force from within that destroyed all inhibitions. Drugs were a catalyst that released all the demons from inside of us.

Q: Would the crimes have happened without Manson's order?

Definitely not! Bugliosi, the prosecuting attorney, agrees that Manson was the catalyst. We would never have gone out on our own and killed people. It was not our idea of an exciting night. We murdered after taking on Manson's beliefs and hatred toward society, but it was nothing we wanted to do. We could have said no, but our foolish hearts were darkened. True, I had anger in my heart and released it during the crimes. I had misplaced anger, but enough to kill? — not without many other factors, none of which excuses my actions.

Manson had the motive. It was more than just his crazy philosophy and a copycat murder. Manson was angry at Doris Day's son, Terry Melcher, for not giving him a recording contract. Terry was an acquaintance who used to live at the house where the murders took place. It's believed that Manson was at the house looking for Terry the night before the murders and was offended by the new occupants. As a result, he sent us there to kill them and to start Helter Skelter. I also believe that Manson and another family member went to the house afterward and disturbed the crime scene.

Q: Do you think the crime would have happened without you?

I hear you asking a lot of "what if" questions. I believe if Manson hadn't asked me to kill that night, he would have asked someone else. Whether they would have gone through with it or not, I don't know. I do think Manson would have gotten someone to carry out his madness. The sad

part is that many were waiting in line to carry out his orders. There are those who still worship him today.

Q: Do you think it takes a certain kind of person to commit murder?

I do believe anyone is capable of killing, but where we actually cross the line to cold-blooded murder, I don't know. I know we are all born with a corrupt nature that must be born-again in Christ. Jeremiah the prophet says, *“The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?”* (17:9). We need a proper upbringing, but at any time, a person can choose to rebel against all he knows that is good. I turned my back on my parents and their God and society. I allowed my belief system to become twisted, and when that occurs, anything can happen, even murder. I do believe that deception is possible for anyone; not necessarily Manson's, but a very demonic one, designed for them.

Q: Can you summarize the underlying cause of the crime?

To sum it up, this rebellious act evolved from a corrupt value system, wrong beliefs and a lack of personal identity and self-worth, combined with Manson madness, meth violence and being driven by demons. In the end, we are each accountable for our own actions, and nothing and nobody else is. I have learned clearly that our decisions can have grave consequences.

Q: How do you feel today about the crime you committed?

I feel horrible! If I'd just punched someone, I could have apologized to them, or if I'd stolen something, I could have returned it. But I took a life, many of them — lives I can't give back. My victims are in their graves. It's final! I can't share my feelings with them.

That's how I feel, helpless to do anything for the victims, helpless about the whole situation. This is why I turned to God. I knew He could do something with my life, and He did. If He can help me, He can help anyone! I believe that God can use my life — the evilness of my crime and the fact that He rescued me — to give hope to others.

The Victims

Q: Let's talk about the victims. What do you think has caused you to feel the way you do today?

It takes the Spirit of God to produce empathy — a capacity for experiencing the feelings and thoughts of others. In 1974, the book *Helter Skelter* arrived at the prison library. As I read about Wilfred Parent going to the morgue to identify his son Steve and returning home, his wife in hysterics, both putting their three kids in bed with them, holding each other and crying themselves to sleep, I broke. I could have turned to a psychiatrist or to drugs with the pain, but the Lord had Christians coming from all directions to reach out to me. They didn't know what was troubling me, but God did, and He sent them to comfort me. They knew that I needed Christ, and it wasn't long before I would surrender my all to Him.

God gives hope, even though we don't deserve it. God never stopped loving me, nor did the body of Christ. As a result, in May 1975, I asked Jesus Christ into my life. He began to show me the true reality of my gruesome, disgusting crime, and the devastating pain of my victims. My sin caused unbearable pain.

Q: What did the Lord show you about your victims?

One thing really stands out, but He didn't show it to me all at once. The empathy I've developed over the years didn't come in a flash. The Lord began to show me that every life — man, woman, or child is made in the image of God and is of enormous value in His eyes. This thought was entirely missing at the time of my crime, even though my mother had tried to teach me to live for others.

It takes God to show a person the value of life. I know many people who are clueless about the pain they've caused because they haven't admitted their own pain; instead, they medicate it daily with drugs, sex, and the like. I was concerned that I didn't know how to feel about my victims' deep pain and knew I needed help. I began to see that as my view of God changed, my view of my victims changed.

Q: Can you elaborate on the difference in the way you felt about your victims at the time of the crime and the way you feel today?

I think I've already shared how I felt at the time of the crime. We talked about my selfishness and lack of feelings, the false belief system, cult mentality, drugs, and even the music. This rebellious lifestyle developed into a sort of “us and them” syndrome. Our victims had become our enemies, even though we didn't know them. It was what they had become in our minds as a result of Manson's constant programming and mind control.

I think you know how I feel today. I have tried to put myself in the shoes of my victims and their families. I could never do this entirely, but over the years, I've grown willing to go there in my thoughts and feelings. It's not easy, but I must be willing to look at what I've done in its fullness. By faith, I have placed it on the cross of Calvary where Christ died for my sin, pain and sorrow, so that I could be healed.

Q: You mentioned earlier that you don't beat yourself up with guilt, but some people think you should. What do you say about this?

If anyone should beat themselves up, I should. I've learned, though, that it doesn't pay, but instead, makes things worse. It's not that I haven't struggled with it tremendously. But guilt robs a person of their future, and as long as we stay chained to it, we'll go nowhere. God, in His mercy, has given me a future. He has removed those chains.

I've come to understand that Christ came to free us of our guilt. Don't get me wrong, I am guilty of my crime, and I am ashamed of what I did, but to wallow in guilt would only create another victim. Christ took our guilt and gave us freedom from the hold our past has on us.

Q: How do you think your crimes have impacted your victims and their families?

I took my victims' most precious possession — life itself. I caused tremendous anguish, distress and suffering. I took their dreams, visions for life and careers. I took their very breath, and I gave them a grave. I took the love of their families' hearts, their pride and joy. It was a total heartbreak. I took a lifetime of experiences from both the victims and their families; hugs and kisses, childhoods, school and graduations, marriages and children, vacations, and family reunions. I replaced all these joys of life with funerals, loss and unbearable grief.

I ripped families apart; moms and dads from their sons and daughters, husbands and wives from one another, brothers from sisters, and vice versa. In reality, my crime has tentacles that have spread throughout society and affected the lives of hundreds, or thousands, possibly millions of people. What impact has my crime had? It has had a devastating impact. It was an absolute tragedy. And to this day, it is still making an impact.

Q: If you had the opportunity to say something to the victims and their families, what would you say?

I apologize for taking the lives of their loved ones, for their agony, and the grief I have caused. There is no excuse, no minimizing the blame I am due, and no denial of guilt. The pain I have caused is enormous. Nothing I can say can take the pain away. It was my selfishness, my rebellious anger and total disregard for human life. What hurts most is the thought that their family members would be alive today if not for me. This is hard to live with because of the love and concern I now have for others.

Undeservedly, I have some good days even in prison, but for them, what I've done is unforgettable. I have devastated their lives. I am so deeply sorry for the enormous amount of pain that continues to this day in the lives of the families of my victims. If anyone deserved the death penalty for their crime, it was me. But I didn't get off scot-free. I remember daily that I took the lives of Abigail Folger and Sharon Tate. My deepest sorrow is with their families, and with the families of Leno and Rosemary LaBianca, Jay Sebring, Voytek Frykowski and Steve Parent. My name is marked for life, a mark that only God can erase. I hesitate to ask for the forgiveness of anyone else. What I have done is humanly impossible to forgive.

My desire is for my apology to be more than words. I live with remorse and shame on a daily basis. I desire to show my victims' families that I am sorry by the life I live now. I know it doesn't

seem fair that I go on living and their family members don't. God has changed my life. My life is a testimony that change is possible. I know that may be hard to accept, but many have found hope, saying, "If your life can change, mine can too!" So, I'm taking every opportunity to help others get in touch with their feelings concerning the impact their sin has had on their victims and themselves. This way, there will be fewer victims in the future.

Q: You say the crime has tentacles that have spread throughout society. Can you explain?

The very name "Manson" strikes fear in the hearts of mankind. It has been said that people worry about him somehow getting to them like they worry about getting some disease.

The murders seem to have taken on a life of their own. Our society seems fascinated with murder, but the horror of these crimes made it very easy to take them personally. They shocked the conscience of America, and fear began to exude its control. Students who were not even alive at the time, study the murders. The rock group Marilyn Manson took on Manson's name and as a result, they've spread the Manson madness into the hearts and lives of millions. He actually burns crosses at his rock concerts.

I don't know many people who haven't heard of these murders. Fear quickly spread throughout Los Angeles and the country. ABC's Diane Sawyer said recently that the murders ended the decade of love and changed the heart of America. These crimes were strange and bizarre and these are the pictures that have affected the minds of the people. Others, such as the Satanists and the neo-Nazi skinheads, are fascinated with Manson, even taking up his cause. It really saddens me to see the negative aspects I have helped perpetuate in our society.

Q: Do you think it angers the families of your victims to see you prospering, in a sense, while their family members are in their graves?

Some are angry, and I understand. Others are proud of my changed life. I apologize for the agony I have caused them! The only thing I can't be sorry for is what the Lord has done to change my life. I truly don't deserve His goodness.

I don't know why the death penalty was abolished in 1972. It doesn't seem too cruel or unusual for what I did. Some call it a fluke in the law, but I believe God had another purpose for my life. We need examples of God's forgiveness and grace in these days and times. I've seen many come to Christ as a result of His testimony through my life. I've even seen people who were angry at me get saved by what God has done. The Scripture says, "*God deliberately chose things the world considers foolish in order to shame those who think they are wise*" (1 Corinthians 1:27, NLT).

Q: It's pretty widely known that resentment and anger have a negative effect on people. Do you agree?

Yes I do. If we allow our hearts and minds to be taken over by resentment and anger, it can only have a harmful physical effect. This is known as a psychosomatic illness. The psyche is the mind, which has an effect on the soma — the body. The Scriptures counsel us not to allow a root of bitterness to grow, or we will be corrupted by its poison, and in turn poison many others.

Victims can easily justify allowing bitterness to grow. They have been hurt tremendously and anger is a natural response of the vindictive nature of mankind. But this does not help or make it right. It will cause cancerous disease and create another victim. The devil is on the loose, and the only thing that can stop his destructive victim mentality is God's grace and forgiveness.

Q: Has your family been harassed by those who don't forgive?

Yes, they have. Their feelings are understandable, but my family doesn't deserve it, because I am the one who hurt my victims. They think by hurting my family, they hurt me. It does hurt, but God has given me much grace and made me sensitive to my victims' suffering. I'm reaping the consequences of my sin.

My parents and siblings were disgraced by my crime. My Dad painted over the “Watson” name on his store. He went to his grave with the shame of my life, and all of my family members live with it. They have suffered enough and could not have survived without God's strength.

Q: How do you personally handle these “attacks”?

I've learned not to give it place in my mind. And when I do, I pray for those who make false accusations and for those who profit from the sensationalism — those who create the news. It's good to see some of the news media apologizing for the stories they've made up.

I just don't pay it any attention. I'm too busy doing with my life what God would have me do, always seeking a positive direction. I feel if I were to stop, get side tracked and give the enemy place, I'd be out of God's will.

I do my best to do everything as forthright and honest as possible. I'm a firm believer that we reap what we sow. I leave my enemies and their misdeeds to God. There will always be people who slander the Watson name. Some stumble into our lives only to receive Christ, so overall I see these attacks as a good thing.

Q: Have you tried to make contact with the families of the victims?

My gut feeling is that most of them just don't want to hear from me. I don't want to cause them more grief and distress. I think about the families always and pray for their healing, and that the doors will be opened to make contact.

Some of the victims' family members have come to my parole hearings over the years, but this is a very high stress climate. They come with the purpose of angrily demanding that I not be released. I believe it does more harm to the victim than it does to me. I do feel somewhat intimidated and very ashamed during those times. It's also very hard for me to share my heart, and have meaningful dialogue with my victims in that atmosphere.

I feel the families have been persuaded that they need to vent their anger in order to be healed. This may help, but only God, with His amazing grace, can heal an angry heart. God understands the angry heart and desires to wrap His loving arms around them. I had an opportunity to wrap my arms around a victim's family member, and I know the loving feeling.

Q: You mean some of the victims' families have forgiven you for what you've done?

Yes, some have, but I can't divulge who all of them are for fear that they'd be persecuted. To forgive is not a popular thing to do within some families. It can cause great division.

In society today, there are two kinds of victim mentality — good and bad. Good, if you angrily demand justice, and bad, if you forgive.

This is the case with Suzan. She forgave me for killing her parents. The act had a healing effect upon her, but after it was made known, she and her children were harassed and persecuted.

Q: Tell me about Suzan, how was it that she came to forgive you?

Only Christ can make the miracle of forgiveness possible. Suzan says she never allowed others to cast her into the role of “victim,” rather, she chose to remain open-minded. She became a Christian in 1986 and was called into the prison ministry for a short time. She wrote me for a year without my knowing who she was. She eventually came all the way from New Mexico to visit me — eight months pregnant. While on the visit she shared with me who her mother and stepfather were — she was there to forgive me.

At first, I didn't believe her, but as she shared how she had come home and found her parents' bodies, her identity was evident. We'd have many more visits, sharing many close times in the healing process.

I've seen how her children have grown up without grandparents and the hole that was left in their childhoods. Their lives were shattered. The more I've allowed myself to look through the eyes of my victims, the greater my remorse.

Q: What would you say to the victims' families, who have not forgiven you?

I think I've already said what I wanted to say. I just pray they will receive God's grace to forgive me; not for my sake, but for their own healing. It doesn't erase their memory of what took place, but it can heal the bitterness that resides as a result of my offense.

I pray that God will do more miracles like He did with Suzan and I. As God puts it together, more families will contact me, so that greater healing can take place. God sent Jesus Christ not only to reconcile us to Himself, but us to one another. I pray to have more experiences like Suzan and I had that day in the visiting room.

Q: In what way do you feel victims and their families can be involved with offenders in a positive way?

The victims may not be able to be directly involved with the offender except by correspondence and phone calls. In some states, there are programs set up for victim/offender reconciliation, but in most states this is not a high priority or even encouraged. One program is called “Restorative Justice,” which I suggest you Google for resources. This movement provides a pathway for reconciliation and restoration between the victim and the offender. In some states, the Department of Corrections offers victim/offender groups. The victims wouldn't be involved

directly with their offenders, but would be able to share their pain and grief with other offenders. This is a positive way for both the victims and the offenders to benefit.

Q: What are some of the steps an offender can take to better understand the plight of victims and their families?

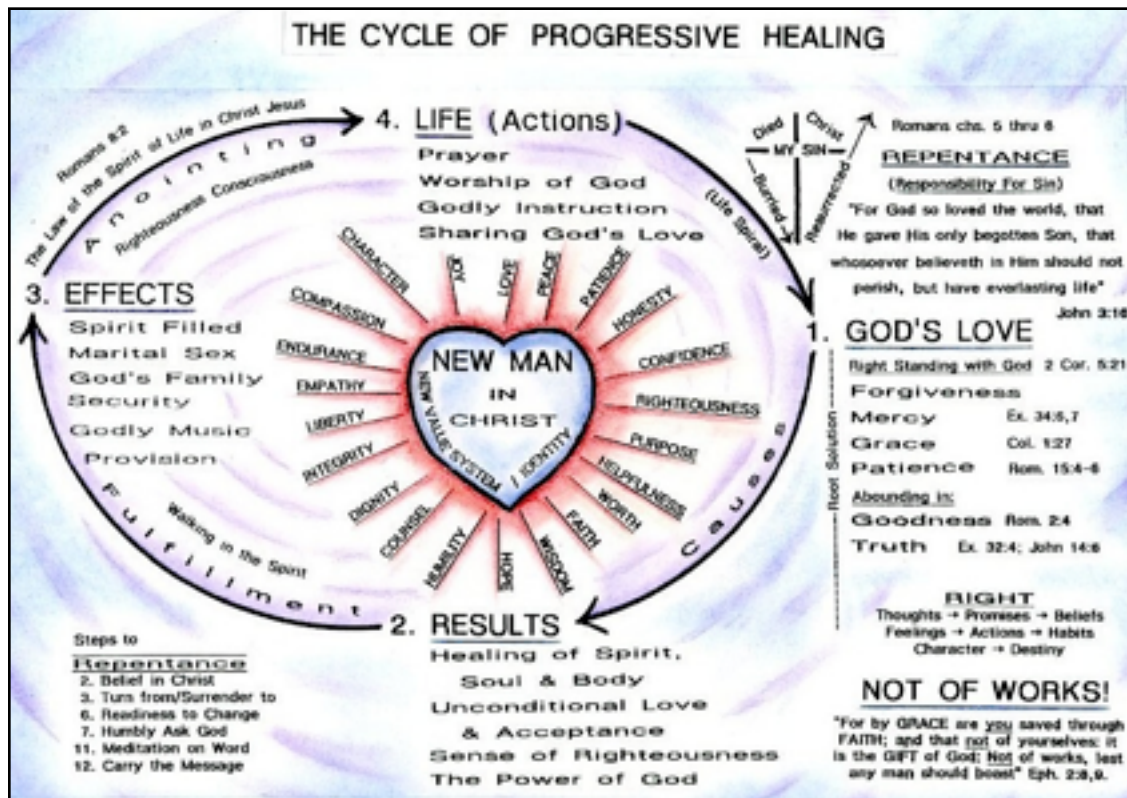
I've seen many offenders helped through Christian recovery groups in prison and upon parole. These groups lead a person to Christ, our Wonderful Counselor for help, honesty and eventually, victim reconciliation.

If there is a victim/offender group available, offenders should enroll in it immediately to get in touch with their victim's pain, and their own. But number one, though, is getting in touch with God's love through Christ. He gives the power to feel for another, and the ability to free all parties from the bondage of bitterness and resentment.

I believe until a person recognizes the devastating impact that they've had upon their victim, they'll continue to hurt others. And they'll continue coming back to prison, until they realize God's fervent desire to pour his love, healing and forgiveness into their lives.

The Death Penalty

Q: Charles, I want to talk about the death penalty. But first, by doing this interview, do you fear being misunderstood by the victims' families?



The Cycle of Progressive Healing

I pray they'll see this entire interview as an apology to them. I hope to answer their most often asked question: "Why?" or "How?" There is no justifiable reason for my crimes.

I hope to express my deepest regret for this wrong done to them. I feel a mandate to share my heart, but I don't want to be even more offensive. I hope to offer some answers, knowing that nothing I can do will take away the pain I have caused. Only Christ can do that.

But also, I'm willing to take the chance of being misunderstood, in hopes that even one rebellious youth will hear my message and turn to God. This is what halts the evil nature of mankind from creating more victims and bringing ruin to more families.

Q: You were sentenced to death for your crime, correct?

Yes, that's right. My trial was separate from Manson and the girls'. I fought extradition from Texas, thinking that a separate trial with a "diminished capacity" defense might yield a different result, but it didn't. We all received sentences of death and ended up on death row.

Q: Weren't you shaken and scared by the sentence?

It was a scary thought — going to death row, but getting out of Los Angeles County Jail was such a relief. I arrived at San Quentin in November 1971, and actually started coming back to life there. The trial had really worn me down and surprisingly, the pressure lifted.

During my days in County Jail and while on death row, I sought God to comfort me in my pain. I believed He had His hand on me and that I could even hear His voice, and He assured me that I was His and that He had forgiven me for all the evil I had done. But still, I had not taken Him as Lord of my life. I wanted all that He had for me, but I was not willing to give Him my whole life. That would come later.

Q: Did you ever think of committing suicide and saving the state the money?

No, not really, although I got to a pretty low state in the Los Angeles County Jail — to the point of not wanting to live. I felt like a stranger in a strange land. I became very paranoid, lonely and full of guilt. I stopped eating and lost weight — down to 106 pounds. I was tied to a bed and forced to eat through a feeding tube. I was diagnosed as catatonic and sent off to a mental hospital. I had given up and wasn't willing to help myself.

During that time, a jail chaplain reached out and ministered spiritual life to me. He kept me going in jail, and the better treatment in the hospital got me back to jail for trial. The chaplain was waiting and slowly nursed me back to life through God's Word. My mom had sent him materials to give to me. The Lord revealed to me during that time that whether I lived or died, I was His. I believe that my early upbringing in the church helped me to reach out to God instead of turning to suicide. Hope was always in the back of my mind, and my family never gave up on me.

Q: Why weren't you put to death?

Well, in 1972 the death penalty was declared “cruel and unusual punishment.” I remember waiting up that night to hear the news. We were all relieved; the threat of death was gone, and now there could be some sort of future. I was only on death row for nine months.

By the time I got to death row, there was already talk that it would be abolished, plus my attorney in Texas assured me that it would never be carried out again in California. For me this was true, but just a couple of years later, it was brought back. I look on it as God's mercy and His having a different plan for my life, undeserving as I was.

In reality, three decades ago, society looked far more skeptically upon this ultimate punishment. Back then, 47% of Americans opposed the death penalty and 42% favored it. I believe there was just a greater sense of mercy and less anger in society at that time.

Q: Can't you understand how the victims' families wanted you to be put to death?

Yes, it's easy to understand. I've often thought of the life I have been able to live, unlike their family members whose lives I destroyed. I live with the way my sin affected other people. It

doesn't seem fair to me either. I can't explain it, or the reason other unjust things like this take place. They truly didn't deserve all the pain I caused, nor did I deserve to live.

I know the shame and heartache of living with the past. The effects of my sin are tremendous. I have experienced God's forgiveness, but there are those who will never forgive what I have done. I feel most victims despise God's goodness on the repentant sinner. The whole point of the Gospel message is that Jesus came to seek and to save that which was lost. This includes me! Jesus doesn't want me suffering in my sin. He sees me forgiven and desires my total restoration, but still, there are many painful aspects of my sowing and reaping.

I understand the needs of the victims' families, who haven't received God's ability to feel compassion toward the prisoner. I think we have to be able to separate the sin from the sinner. I hate what I did to my victims. I hate the crimes committed by those who live around me. I live with the worst of sinners, but by separating their sin from them, I am able to love them. That is how others can love me. I've learned that God loves the sinner, but hates the sin. I try to look upon those around me as God would — with open, loving arms. We can only do this with His help — the power of the Holy Spirit.

Q: So, do you think you deserved the death penalty?

Yes, without a doubt. I've always said that if anyone deserved the death penalty, it was me. For some reason, I didn't get what I deserved. I choose to believe it was the grace of God, but others call it a fluke in the law. I was shown mercy when I showed no mercy. I didn't deserve this mercy, but I am very thankful for it. I've been given a second chance.

I could be the poster child for death penalty advocates, but at the same time, I feel my life testifies to the fact that God can take evil people and change them, including me. I feel that many people who are being executed today are totally changed people from who they were when they committed the crime, but no mercy is found for them.

Q: What is this term “closure” that the victims' family members use so often?

I see it as the victims' families desiring my life to cease, just as I caused the life of their family member to cease; sort of like “an eye for an eye” — justice done. I believe they're convinced that their terrible loss will be lessened by the taking of another life.

The U.S. News and World Report recently reported that families of victims who chose to witness executions of those convicted of the murder of their loved ones, more often than not, find no closure or healing in the process.

I am sympathetic toward the families' need for closure, but I wonder, too, if pain can be relieved through the death of an offender. Jesus says, “...*Come to me, all you who are weary and carry heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you. Let me teach you, because I am humble and gentle, and you will find rest for your souls*” (Matthew 11:28, 29, NLT).

I believe that true closure comes only after forgiving the offender. God desires reconciliation between the victim and the offender. He loves both equally, and His ultimate desire is for healing both parties. Jesus made this possible on the cross of Calvary where he said, “It is finished,” and

then He died for our sins. Closure comes as we come to know God's forgiveness for our sins through our loving Savior, and then we're able, by His power, to forgive those who have sinned against us.

Q: You mean God doesn't desire that a man be put to death for his crimes?

Biblically, we're living in the period of grace. God's grace is sufficient for every sin, and His mercy must be the guiding factor in the decisions of our justice system. Only the Holy and just God of Scripture can administer the final punishment.

I believe that Jesus Christ took our death penalty on the cross of Calvary — God's ultimate punishment. *“The wages of sin is death,”* and if it were not for Jesus' death, as sinners, the penalty would be death for us all. But God in His mercy put our sins upon His Son. He took our place on the cross so that justice would not demand our death. The cross was a place of execution.

Q: You're saying that Jesus Christ abolished the death penalty?

We know that He took on Himself the penalty for our sin so that we are free from the wrath of God. We know this does not free us from the penalty of a crime against society. A prisoner must still do his time. Whether this penalty includes being put to death or not has spawned one of the fiercest debates of the century, outside the abortion issue. I believe Christ took my death penalty.

What most pro-death-penalty activists forget is that murder in the Old Testament wasn't the only death-penalty sin. There were forty-two death-penalty sins including adultery, kidnapping, witchcraft, idolatry, working on the Sabbath, sodomy, homosexuality, whoredom, sacrilege, stubbornness and rebellion, gluttony, drunkenness and many others. It wasn't only eye for an eye and tooth for a tooth; but you could be set on fire, stoned, hung, put to death with a sword and scourged for almost anything, including cursing your parents.

On top of this, Jesus preached in his Sermon on the Mount that even if you look at woman to lust after her, you have committed adultery, and He said being angry gets the same judgment as killing someone. God's law reveals our sinfulness and need for grace. His grace and mercy free us from the penalty of death.

Q: So, why do we consider murder the only death-penalty sin, when the Old Testament calls for the death penalty for many sins?

That's a good question. It seems that if we were going to defend the death penalty by using the Old Testament, we'd have the death penalty for all those crimes. This way the United States could become the number-one executioner in the world.

The top executioners today are China, Ukraine, Belarus, Iran, Saudi Arabia, Singapore and a few others; the same countries who persecute Christians the most. China executed almost 4,200 people in 1997, versus 74 in the USA. China executes unsavory businessmen, bandits and political deviants. If the United States were to impose the death penalty for all Old Testament sins, we could easily match or exceed the execution rate of all countries combined.

But I don't think the conscience of our country could handle scores of executions a day. In reality, this is what we're facing in the 21st century. We must take a serious look at our death-penalty laws and see that it didn't work in the Old Testament, and it won't work today. Jesus came to give us a new way to deal with the sins of mankind through His grace and mercy. The New Testament is quite clear that “mercy triumphs over judgment.”

Q: What was the early churches' attitude toward criminals and the death penalty?

The Apostle Paul said in 2 Timothy 1:10 that “...our Savior Jesus Christ has abolished death and has brought life through the Gospel.” We know that Paul is talking about spiritual death. We will all die physically unless Jesus Christ returns before that time. But should prisoners die at the hands of an angry society or a revengeful justice system? Paul's answer, “*This is a true saying, and everyone should believe it: Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners — and I was the worst of them all*” (1 Timothy 1:15, NLT).

Of course, the Apostle Paul had been forgiven much, even for killing Christians. As a Pharisee, he was very self-righteous in his beliefs, until Christ delivered him from this ancient Jewish sect noted for strict observance and ceremonies. As a Christian, Paul didn't consider the purpose of the law for capital punishment, but to expose sin and our need for a merciful Savior.

Q: So, you're saying God's justice in the Old Covenant is now carried out differently in the New, right?

Yes, and I believe He expects mankind to administer justice differently in light of the cross of Calvary. God is not angry; He is a loving Heavenly Father. After man sinned in the garden, He called for Adam in order to help him. Adam was fearful, but God reached out in love. God gave the law as a way for man to avoid falling under the curse of sin and to be aware of how to walk in His blessings. Even when we are dead in sin, God loves us and wants us to experience His best.

Under the curse of the Old Testament law, justice demanded payment for sin by the one who committed it. When sin reigned, God was angry. He was required by righteousness to judge sin in the flesh of man. But regardless, He has wanted our best for four thousand years, to bring man into a loving relationship with Him.

When the Messiah, Jesus Christ, took our curse by dying on Calvary in our place, God's justice for sin was satisfied. As a result, when we receive Christ, a relationship of peace with God comes, no matter what our sin. God dealt with sin, made us righteous, and finds no fault with us. He washed us with the blood of Christ. We have full acceptance in Christ. We will reap what we have sown. God will bring correction and discipline to our lives, but He will never hurt or reject us. Does this sound like a God who demands the death penalty today, or a Heavenly Father who loves even the worst of His wayward children?

Jesus was confronted by the Pharisees for dining with many notorious sinners. He replied, “*Healthy people don't need a doctor — sick people do.*” Then He added, “...*Now go and learn the meaning of this Scripture: 'I want you to be merciful; I don't want your sacrifices.' For I have come to call sinners, not those who think they are already good enough*” (Matthew 9:13; 12:7, NLT).

Q: What was Jesus' view on the death penalty?

Jesus, as the Son of Man, chose His Father's view. He said, “...*I do nothing without consulting the Father. I judge as I am told. And my judgment is absolutely just, because it is according to the will of God who sent me, it is not merely my own*” (John 5:30, NLT).

Jesus Christ reflected the Father's glory, full of grace and truth (John 1:14, 16-18). The LORD revealed Himself to Moses, showing that His nature and glory were compassionate and gracious, slow to anger, abounding in love and faithfulness, maintaining love to thousands, and forgiving wickedness, rebellion and sin (Exodus, Ch. 33 & 34).

As Christians, we are reflectors of God's nature and glory. Our hearts have been softened, and the veil of flesh removed by the work of the cross. We are to walk as Jesus walked in the presence of our Heavenly Father (2 Corinthians, Ch. 3 & 4). Sadly, too many of us reflect the popular political view rather than take a stand for the heart and will of God.

Q: You're not saying the early church believed there should be no punishment for sin, are you?

No, not at all! A few years ago, Cornerstone Magazine, a publication from a Chicago-based ministry, Jesus People U.S.A., published an article with many insights concerning the early church and the death penalty that I'd like to share with you. The authors, Larry Bishop and Mark Metcalf commented, after much research, that the attitude of the early church wasn't to acquit the guilty, but to welcome a returning sinner. The attitude was to encourage and to revive the sinner; not to judge or to reject him. The purpose being to bring forth repentance through God's goodness, hope, mercy and compassion. Augustine, one of our early-church fathers, wished that criminals wouldn't be “...avenged by the infliction of similar injuries in the way of retaliation.” He called for judgment to “...be tempered by considerations of humanity...not to gratify the passion of revenge...but to exercise a desire to heal them.”

The early churches' attitude toward criminal offenders can be found in the Apostolic Constitutions. These are laws for government in the early church. These laws upheld the concept of a God who is righteous and merciful. They stated that offenses must not be ignored, yet offenders must not be condemned.

The early church focused on forgiveness and compassion, in opposition to the strict application of the law, and was interested in healing, instead of expelling and rejecting criminals. In their mind, reconciliation with God was number one, followed by the restoration of community relationships.

Q: What has been secular society's effect on the Biblical way?

The church began to take on secular views during the time of Constantine around 350 A.D. The Emperor Constantine made Christianity the state religion, but in so doing, he infected the church with a human institution, laying the foundation for the current Christian view of criminal justice. He didn't consecrate his life or the state to God. Today, the falsely-interpreted “separation of church and state” doctrine does the same. The intention of the first amendment was not to remove Godly values and ethics from our criminal justice system. I believe the Biblical way is to

incorporate Scriptural principles of grace, mercy and forgiveness in providing alternatives to the death penalty.

I know Jesus said we should “...render unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's, and unto God the things that are God's,” but He wasn't co-signing Caesar's actions that were contrary to the Word of God. It's important to ask ourselves what Jesus would do concerning capital punishment, regardless of the government's stand on it.

The popularity of the death penalty reveals one's unbelief in the love and mercy of God. On the other hand, “...to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God” as the Prophet Micah declares, is proof of really knowing God.

Q: But isn't the state an essential part of God's earthly social order in all its functions?

Yes, but we must be able to distinguish between the God of an American civil religion and the God who reveals Himself through Jesus Christ and the Holy Scriptures. As a society, many people have become politically conservative in their thinking and they equate this with conservative theology.

The Apostle Paul said in the beginning of Romans 13 that we should submit to all secular authorities, affirming that they are instituted for our good. He says they “bear not the sword in vain.” The word “sword” or “*machaira*” in Greek is symbolic of judicial authority. It could include the death penalty, but in context with the end of Romans 12, Paul admonishes us to “*Recompense to no man evil for evil...for it is written, 'Vengeance is mine, I will repay saith the Lord.'*”

I believe we are on shaky ground when we seek to justify capital punishment by using Romans 13. As a society, many have convinced themselves that capital punishment is God's will, a belief that provides both executioner and spectator with the feeling that they are directly involved in the Lord's work.

Q: So, am I hearing you saying that we aren't called to carry out God's vengeance?

That's exactly what I'm saying. If we're honest with ourselves, we'll have to admit that we're retaliating in vengeance, not justice, when it comes to capital punishment. Vengeance is just a natural response of the vindictive nature of fallen man.

We're not called to carry out God's vengeance. If our heart is revengeful, we must ask God to convict our heart, knowing that our works will be judged by Him. James, our Lord's half-brother wrote: “*For there will be no mercy for you if you have not been merciful to others. But if you have been merciful, God's mercy toward you will win out over His judgment against you*” (2:13, NLT).

Q: What are some of the Biblical examples where God has shown mercy instead of the judgment of death?

The Cornerstone article mentions three examples God gives us of how He expects man to administer justice with mercy, instead of vengeance. They are the cases of Cain, David and the woman caught in adultery.

Cain murdered his brother Abel in anger. God confronted him and punished him. Cain was concerned about vengeful people slaying him for what he had done, so God set a mark on him so that none would kill him. This is God's example of justice to mankind.

David, a man after God's own heart, committed adultery with Bathsheba, then had her husband killed. God told David as a result: "...*the sword shall never depart from thine house,*" and He took David's wives. David repented. The Lord forgave David and told him: "...*thou shalt not die.*" God had mercy upon David. He had a different plan for David's life (2 Samuel 12).

The woman caught in adultery in John, chapter 8, was brought by the scribes and Pharisees to Jesus. They told Him the law commanded her to be stoned, but what would He do? He told them, "*He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her*" (John 8:7). They were convicted by their own conscience, and they walked away. Since they did not condemn her, He told the woman that He didn't condemn her either. Public exposure turned out to be enough to punish her.

Q: We hear victims of crime crying out for justice, but I hear you saying that mercy is the answer, right?

Justice has come to mean only punishment and even vengeance as we have seen. Righteous justice is doing what is right or just. Those crying out for justice do not know God's justice. It includes His grace and mercy of the New Testament and His expression of love for all mankind, including those convicted of capital offenses.

We really need to look at this issue from God's perspective. God asks the Prophet Ezekiel to speak His mind in verse 33:11, "*As surely as I live, says the Sovereign Lord, I take no pleasure in the death of wicked people. I only want them to turn from their wicked ways so they can live. Turn! Turn from your wickedness...why should you die?*"

As we really dig into God's word, we will see that God's emphasis is not on vengeance, but on merciful justice. I am so thankful for the mercy I have been shown by God and the criminal justice system, but I wonder if there is still a place for mercy in our legal system today. Surely, vengeance and killing sanctioned by the state, do not reach for a higher sense of justice and healing, but rather, just the opposite.

Q: Do you see the death penalty being unevenly applied in a discriminatory and flawed fashion?

It's pretty widely known through recent studies that the death penalty is a privilege of the poor and penniless; those who come from minority groups or impoverished backgrounds, those who are not able to afford decent legal help or those who didn't have the resources and abilities to defend themselves. Some are even retarded.

There are a number of death-row inmates who have been found innocent and released. Prosecutors, judges and juries can make mistakes in the justice process. There's a long list of prisoners who have been executed, and were later determined to be innocent. Almost one hundred prisoners have been proven innocent, removed from death row, and freed from prison since the death penalty was re-instated in 1977.

Q: Do you believe the death penalty is a deterrent?

There is only scant evidence that it deters crime. There are no statistical facts to prove its deterrent effect. The courts have recognized that capital punishment doesn't deter crime.

Of course, the executed prisoner will never commit another crime, but studies show that few murderers who are released ever commit another violent crime. Chuck Colson didn't think it was a deterrent. He said, "It's a wasted and futile exercise that brings out the worst instinct for revenge in society."

The argument can be made that if the purpose of capital punishment is to deter future crimes, executions should be made public or even televised, instead of conducted in private. Perhaps society's conscience could take executing thousands of prisoners a year in these small, sterile chambers, quietly applying lethal injections, but it wouldn't have the deterrent effect desired.

Q: Some people believe if a prisoner repents, only then should they be spared. What do you think?

I don't think we deserve to impose the death penalty regardless of repentance or lack of repentance. I don't think by executing a person, we've given him every opportunity to repent, be saved and use their life for the propagation of the Gospel.

I find it interesting that Missouri is talking about commuting a death penalty offense to life without parole if a death-row prisoner will give up his kidney or bone marrow. Some people liken this to China selling body parts of pre-executed bodies.

On the other hand, if the requirement was to repent in order to not be executed, we'd have many faking repentance. But I do believe that a prisoner should go through a repentance process before being released into society. As God redeems damaged lives, they are turned toward usefulness.

Q: So, am I hearing you saying that a prisoner's life is valuable to God, but not to man?

That's right. God values every life — man, woman, or child. We're made in God's image and are of enormous value in His eyes. God is pro-life: the life of the unborn, the elderly and the prisoner, even those on death row.

God gave man dominion over the earth, and Romans 13 confirms this by saying that God has placed all governments in power. We are admonished to obey the governments that are sent by God to help us. As a result, things are promised to go well; but if we disobey, we will be brought under their punishment.

The death penalty is a part of our government's punishment now. God permits the death penalty and abortion to take place, but it doesn't mean He approves of it. His perfect will is mercy and life to both the unborn and the prisoner, but He needs man's cooperation.

God awaits our government to turn to Him, and He promises to heal our land. This includes the healing of our crime problem and replacing capital punishment with mercy. As we show

mercy through a kinder society, we will see a kinder and gentler response. The prisoner needs a loving and merciful example.

Q: Do you think people are rethinking their stand on the death penalty after Karla Faye Tucker was put to death?

It may sound strange, but I believe Karla's blood cries out for justice and mercy. I pray that in some way I can help keep the impact that she had upon our society alive. What was the greater value to society — Karla's removal in the death chamber, or her presence as a reminder that even a life shattered by addiction, violence and prostitution can be redeemed and turned toward service to God and helping others.

I don't believe that women should receive greater leniency than men when it comes to the death penalty, born-again or not, but I think Karla's situation truly shows us the hardness of man's heart. God is more than aware of this hardness of heart in the Old Testament when He gave man the freedom to divorce. Jesus' comment was, *“Moses permitted divorce as a concession to your hard-hearted wickedness, but it was not what God had originally intended”* (Matthew 19:8, NLT). I believe God allows the death penalty because of the hardness of man's heart, but it's not what He intends. God intends for us to be merciful above all.

I believe the execution of men, women and children is a national tragedy. We human beings did not create life. God created this life, and He should be the only one to take it. Nothing is accomplished by the taking of another life, and it can never compensate for the victim's life.

I think our Christian sisters and brothers are asking themselves what place mercy has in America's justice system. And a more difficult question is: How do we relate to someone with a heinous past who truly exhibits what the Apostle Paul called the “fruit of the Spirit” given to those redeemed? Karla's plea for mercy was denied, yet her life continued to exhibit love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, gentleness and self-control.

Perhaps God's purpose for Karla's redeemed life was to afflict us with these agonizing questions so that we and our justice system might be redeemed from the rituals of death in which we now engage ourselves.

Q: Do you know of any examples of criminals who escaped execution, were transformed and went on to become decent and useful citizens?

Yes, I do. Recently, I read of a Nathan Leopold. He and another man were wealthy college boys who murdered a 14-year-old just to show that they could commit the perfect crime. Famed attorney Clarence Darrow saved them from execution in 1924. Mr. Darrow told the judge:

“Your Honor stands between the past and the future. You may hang these boys by the neck until they are dead. But you will turn your face toward the past. I am pleading for the future, for a time when hatred and cruelty will not control the hearts of men, when we can learn by reason and judgment and understanding and faith that all life is worth saving and that mercy is the highest attribute of man.”

I'm happy to report that Leopold lived to become a better person. His exemplary prison record and his contribution as a volunteer for dangerous malaria testing during World War II led

to a reduction of his sentence by Illinois Governor Adlai Stevenson and to a pardon in 1958. He went to Puerto Rico to work in hospitals and church missions. In time, he married, earned a master's degree and taught mathematics.

I know others who have escaped the sentence of death. They are free, working and living honorably in society now, but it's rare that a person gets a second chance in this day and age.

Q: Charles, I believe your life is an example of a transformed life, as well. Are you resigned to the penalty you will pay for your past?

I think so. I've been in prison for over three decades. There's no light at the end of the tunnel. I'm just so thankful for the body of Christ and for receiving this second chance in life.

My heart rejoices that Christ took all my judgment for sin on Himself at the cross of Calvary. I boast solely in Christ alone with the Apostle Paul, saying, “...*if any man be in Christ, he is a new [creation]: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new...for God has made Christ to be sin for [me, He] knew no sin, that [I] might be made the righteousness of God in Him*” (2 Corinthians 5:17, 21).

I'm reminded daily of my past. I've been marked in the eyes of man as a murderer, but the mark has been removed in God's eyes and in the eyes of all those who love Him, and He has protected me. I believe the Lord had a different plan for me. My life is in His hands and His grace is sufficient for me until His return. I'd ask for one thing — your prayers.

Forgiveness

Q: Charles, I know we've already talked some about the heart of man and his need for vengeance, but why is man so unforgiving?



Charles with mom and dad after he received Christ in 1975.

My crimes were hideous and terrifying. It's absolutely right for a person to hate such offensive crimes. But in order for us to forgive, we must learn how to process our judgments in light of the grace and mercy of God.

There are other atrocious crimes in the news. We've heard how Andrea Yates drowned her children due to postpartum depression. We've seen pictures of those five precious children, and we grieve with her husband. We sorrow with her mom and dad and our sympathy goes out to them. Yet, in the same news reports, we hear that Andrea is eligible for the death penalty.

How can we justify taking another life? Our thoughts would say, "We can't just give her mental treatment and let her go free. She must pay for killing her innocent children." To the contrary, she can never pay for what she has done. It will torment her for the rest of her life. It will be hard for her to forgive herself. She needs our mercy instead of rejection.

We don't forgive simply because our thoughts are not God's thoughts concerning his mercy (Isaiah 55:8). His thoughts say, "...*God showed His great love for us by sending Christ to die for us while we were still sinners*" (Romans 5:8, NLT).

Justice and mercy met at the cross of Christ. The judgment for Andrea's sin was placed upon Christ. God hates her sin, but He loves Andrea. The Apostle John says, "*This is real love. It is not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son as a sacrifice to take away our sins*" (1 John 4:10, NLT).

Q: Let's talk more about this vengeance in the heart of man. Where does it come from?

Vengeance comes from the vindictive nature of mankind. We were born with this nature. It's the natural response of fallen man. This nature comes from the kingdom of darkness. And just because a person has been put in authority by the people doesn't mean that God says vengeance is right. We may call it justice, but on the contrary, the Lord speaks of righteous judgment, which flows from a heart of mercy.

On the cross of Calvary, Jesus Christ made it possible to reverse man's vindictive nature. Jesus came not to destroy life, but to save life. He came to give us a divine nature, so love and mercy could flow from our hearts. It takes being born from above, or born-again, to have a heart of sympathy not only for the victim, but also for the offender. Forgiveness was given to us through Jesus Christ, and only as we receive it, can we give it.

We can be offended by the sin, yet love the sinner. It helps to recognize the devil as the real enemy of society, and as a nation, we need to kick him off our airwaves and out of our homes. We are to turn our anger loose on him, not the person he is using. We can take back our streets, forcing the enemy out of our lives, while showing mercy to his victims. We have a common enemy, and Jesus Christ has brought him to his knees. We are to enforce his defeat daily.

Q: You're not blaming society and the devil for your crime, are you?

Definitely not! I'm responsible for my crime because of my wrong beliefs, thoughts, and shortcomings — pride, lusts, rebellion, anger, and self-centeredness. In my sin of unbelief toward God, the works of my flesh were free to operate.

All these elements that shaped my mind are in society, but each of us decides whether to take them on or not. I was controlled by them; very sinful desires were at work within me. As a result, I released my pent-up anger in violence upon my victims.

The devil was free to invade and manipulate my life because of my deceitful, unbelieving heart. We all have a common problem as a society. The Bible calls him "...*the Devil, your great enemy who prowls around like a roaring lion looking for some victim to devour*" (1 Peter 5:8, NLT). "...*Satan, the mighty prince of the power of the air. He is the spirit at work in the hearts of those who refuse to obey God. All of us used to live that way, following the passions and desires of our evil nature*" (Ephesians 2:2, 3, NLT). The enemy is expelled from our lives when we trust in the grace of God and not our own strength. We are powerless over the works of darkness without faith in Christ's victory at the cross.

We choose whether or not to serve Satan. I chose to serve him. He is the most malignantly-wicked being and in spiritual darkness we take on his persona. We are told to be careful, to watch out for attacks from him, to take a firm stand against him, and to be strong in our faith. He is a very real enemy, but most are blind to his attacks; instead, we listen and play his games.

Our rock musicians worship him in heart, lyric and dress while blaspheming the Lord Jesus Christ. The hearts of children worship the musicians and imitate their lifestyle. We drink his wine and buy his goods, not even knowing that we are being deceived by his sorcery. In time, this bridge to Babylon will be judged by God, the righteous Judge.

Q: Are you saying God will judge us for our sins?

It's been said that if God doesn't judge us soon, He is going to have to apologize to Sodom and Gomorrah. But we are living in a period of grace and mercy. God's mercy abounds. He sees mankind as deserving death. His justice demands it. So in His grace, He sent His only Son, Jesus Christ, as payment for our sin; to take our judgment — what was due us. We owed a debt that we could not pay. God's payment demanded blood, our blood; but God is now satisfied with the blood of His Son.

It's so important for us as mankind to understand how depraved we are in order to understand the heart of an offender. We need to be able to identify with the wickedness of the heart of man. Then, we can understand how such horrible crimes happen. God sees our desperately wicked heart. With a heart of compassion and love for the world, He gave His Son. Now we can be forgiven through believing in and confessing Jesus' death, burial and resurrection for us. Jesus has bridged the gap between us and God by the cross of Calvary to create us in righteousness and true holiness.

It's easy for me to understand this forgiveness. The Scripture says he that has been forgiven much, loves much. That's me. I am able to identify with the offender. I am in his position. I am an offender — but a forgiven offender. I understand how Jesus paid a debt that I could not pay, and I rejoice and praise God for His death in my place.

Q: How can a person possibly forgive such a horrible crime?

Forgiveness flows from the heart of God. Without truly knowing Him, it's impossible to forgive. His voice is different from the voice of the world system. His voice is not crying out for vengeance. He sees His Son as having paid the price for sin. He is full of grace and mercy.

Many of us really need to spend time with God to get to know His heart and mind, instead of lining up with the popular belief of the day. We are constantly being bombarded with the latest heinous crime, driving us to act upon our fears and be overcome with grief. But as we keep our mind on the Lord, He keeps us in peace so we are able to act in love.

It takes time to heal, but it becomes possible to forgive anything as we spend time in God's Word and in His presence in prayer. We grow to understand God's love for us, living out our faith and caring for others. As a result, the love of God will bring forth forgiveness. This is the divine flow, where God does His best work in our lives.

Q: It's very difficult not to be vengeful these days, isn't it?

There is a battle raging for dominance over our minds. Eighty percent of Americans are pro-death penalty. The religion of victimhood or vengeance is spreading throughout the land. The odds are against us as the mob rules.

In these last days, Jesus speaks of this battle and the stand we'll have to take to choose Him. He says that even family will be against us, but we must let patience possess our soul. This stand we're taking is not popular.

The Apostle Peter says, “*..for you are a chosen people. You are a kingdom of priests, God's holy nation, His very own possession. This is so you can show others the goodness of God, for He called you out of the darkness into His wonderful light*” (1 Peter 2:9, NLT). The Lord has called us to show the sinner mercy. God's vengeance will come later. Those who deserve death will receive it. “*For it is written, 'I will take vengeance; I will repay those who deserve it,' says the Lord*” (Romans 12:19, NLT).

It's time to get back to the garden as we were singing in the '60s. I guess we were singing about the Garden of Eden. Who knows? But if so, this time we need to choose life and not to eat of that tree of death. This is where the vengeance of man all began, when in his own wisdom he began to choose good and evil instead of trusting God.

Q: What can we do as a country to solve this problem?

We're not going to solve this dilemma solely on a political level or in that arena. We hear a loud voice of conservative politics from our pulpits today. We equate conservative theology with conservative politics.

We need more than the mere external application of the law, which will not solve our problems. The law is good, but the law alone will not empower us to be right with God and one another. Our righteousness must be internal so love and loyalty can flow forth from our lives. This exceeds what the strict observation of the law can do.

Jesus didn't come to take over the political system in order to bring healing, although his disciples wanted Him to. In the Old Testament, the land was never healed through political powers, although they tried. The law could not make man complete, so Jesus sent forth the Spirit of God in order to bring His new way of doing things. He came to set up the Kingdom of God in the hearts of kings and to empower us to forgive. Our problem is greater than politics, and must be solved from the inside out. We have a heart problem that only the authority of the true King of kings can cure (Revelation 1:5, 6, NLT).

This doesn't mean that Christians shouldn't participate in politics. Our influence is much needed there to ensure the morals of our land. Jesus said, “*...go and make disciples of all the nations... Teach these new disciples to obey all the commands I have given you*” (Matthew 28:19, 20, NLT).

Q: What specific actions can we take as Christians?

In 2 Chronicles 7:14, the Lord says, “*If my people, which are called by My name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek My face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land.*”

It's the Holy Spirit that moves in the heart of man and brings forth life to the world. God sent the prophets in the Old Testament, but the people did not listen. Today, God's Word is still going forth to heal the land. This is our commission, not politics and vengeance.

God's vengeance will come later, but He won't take pleasure in judging the land. He desires that all people be saved. He has shed His grace on us, and it is time at last to hear His call. We must humble ourselves to Him as He gives the call, *“Look! Here I stand at the door and knock. If you hear me calling and open the door, I will come in, and we will share a meal as friends”* (Revelation 3:20, NLT). Jesus desires to be friends with each of us.

Q: Is this what happened to you, Charles? He asked you to be his friend, and you took Him up on it?

That's right, I was one of the worst sinners, and my heart was full of sadness, pain and guilt. He reached down and knocked on my door. He came into my heart and we shared a meal together. All I had to do was receive His forgiveness. He even empowered me to forgive those who I felt had wronged me.

Like King David, *“I would have lost heart, unless I had believed that I would see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living”* (Psalm 27:13). The Lord revealed to me too, that *“...if I would believe, I would see the glory of God”* (John 11:40).

I had a lot of baggage that I brought to the Lord. He gave me a hunger for His Word, which has slowly renewed my mind to His way of thinking. As a result, my emotional life and actions began to take shape.

One of the many Scriptures written by the Apostle Paul is very meaningful to me: *“Get rid of all bitterness, rage, anger, harsh words, and slander, as well as all types of malicious behavior. Instead, be kind to each other, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, just as God through Christ has forgiven you”* (Ephesians 4:31, 32, NLT). God's counsel through these Scriptures tells me that I must allow Him to deal with my heart before I can forgive as He forgave me.

Q: Earlier, you mentioned the bridge to Babylon. What does this have to do with forgiveness or the lack of it?

Of course, Bridge to Babylon is one of the latest Rolling Stones albums, and they have toured the world with it. Babylon means confusion, so what we're talking about is a bridge to confusion — the kingdom of darkness. In the Bible, Babylon represents the world system of rebellion, pleasure, lust and riches. It represents the low, demonic road of lies and deceit. We cross that bridge every time we choose to serve the devil. He has a lot of bridges that promise happiness, but only produce bitterness, rage, anger, harsh words and slander. These are all qualities of vengeance and malicious behavior — the very things that the Lord tells us to rid ourselves of, because He knows they're bad news.

This low road to Babylon is like a twelve-lane highway where the majority travels at high speed. As Christians, we are not to get caught up in the traffic, but to stay full of the Spirit. We travel a different road, and we overcome by the blood of Jesus Christ, always obedient to the

Lord's commands, sharing His testimony by example, by exemplifying forgiveness. The difference that God makes in our lives can be seen brightly.

Q: You mentioned that Jesus bridged the gap between us and God. Can you explain what's different about this bridge?

Sure. The bridge to God is Jesus Christ. We travel the high road of life when we choose to serve Him. His road is full of light, love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control; all qualities of the Kingdom of God. We choose this road when we choose the road to Calvary, the mountain where Jesus suffered and died for us. Calvary means the state of being tested; mental suffering. This is the Good News, because Jesus took our place, suffering for us.

The road to Calvary is a narrow road, not many get on it. The Bible says many are called, but few are chosen. The Lord is calling all of us to travel this road. The volume is turned up so loud on the lower road that many find it hard to hear His call. He provided forgiveness for everyone 2000 years ago, and He yearns for us to receive it so that we will have forgiveness to give.

Q: So, it's pretty easy to see that a relationship with Jesus Christ gives us power to forgive, right?

That's exactly right, but the enemy still comes with every argument imaginable as to why we should not forgive. As we discussed earlier, the devil is on the prowl, seeking those he may devour. The way he does this is through demonic thoughts that don't line up with God's word — the Truth. Our enemy becomes our own anger, bitterness and resentment. He will try to convince us that we should not forgive, while God's word gives every reason why we should. There is actually an argument that goes on in our mind when this happens.

See, we can either agree with the demonic voice, which always brings confusion, or we can agree with the voice of God, which brings peace of mind. In battle, I have learned not to take things personally. We have a common enemy, so we should not take the fight personally by fighting each other, but together, we should turn on him in unity. He is the enemy bringing this troubling, seducing spirit.

This doesn't mean that we're not answerable for our choices. If we choose the enemy's deception by listening to his voice and acting upon it, we're responsible for our actions. That's why we must cast down his thoughts, and bring all of our thoughts into obedience to God. We are to get mad at the enemy of our soul and stay ready to resist him steadfastly by faith. The bottom line is this: we're not going to listen to his thoughts, which produce hatred, but to God's Word, which produces love.

Q: Did you feel you needed to forgive anyone who had wronged you in your past?

All my life, I listened to the enemy. I listened to people who talked his talk more than I listened to my parents, and I found role models who did the same thing. I walked in a rebellious attitude, but at the same time, I pretended to do the things that pleased my parents. I walked in the fear that they wouldn't accept me. In reality, I was even more worried about being accepted

by everyone else. I ended up in a state of confusion, running from my fears, and becoming a very angry young man, blaming everyone else for my troubles.

I blamed my parents instead of taking responsibility for my own actions. I needed to forgive my parents only for a perceived wrong. My wrong perceptions and judgment of others brought forth many rebellious decisions and much pain. These judgments became my justification to disobey. If I had walked in obedience to my parents, things would have gone well for me. I chose the many bridges to Babylon and became a very confused person with no sound identity. I medicated the pain that all this caused with sex, drugs and rock 'n' roll; but it never offered any satisfaction. I found that only a relationship with Jesus Christ could cure the rebellious soul. He is the only one who brings true satisfaction, heals all our pain and gives us joy to live.

Q: Was it hard for you to forgive Manson for his manipulation?

I know this may be hard to understand, but it really wasn't hard. I blamed him for a long time, and I don't believe the crime would have happened without him. But over the years, I have come to understand how deceived he was and still is. I think I was harder on myself for being so ignorant as to believe in him. I still kick myself often and say to myself, "How could you be so stupid?" I was totally blinded on that road to Babylon. The Bible says that the god of this world blinds our minds so that the light of the glorious Gospel can't shine unto us.

Q: How does your family deal with forgiving you?

My family has always been so great, even while I blamed them. I'm sorry to say that I hurt them more by lashing out at them in blame. They just sat there and loved me. They must have thought I was mentally ill to do what I had done. It took awhile for me to tell them how deeply sorry I was for hurting them and for bringing such sickening pain to their lives.

My family consists of rock-solid people. I came from a great family that never stopped loving me. I consider them victims, too. The pain I have caused them is tragic. I was the weak link in our family. I caused tremendous agony. But as we all cried out to God, He took our pain and comforted us. My family proved their unconditional love for me by supporting me all through the years.

Q: Did you have a hard time forgiving yourself?

Yes. As I grew to understand God's forgiveness, I could forgive myself. It took a while to understand how He could forgive me, but I thought, if He can — I could. It's still difficult to see how anyone else could forgive me. But, since I've received this revelation from God, my eyes were opened to how forgiveness comes from Him through us.

I still beat up on myself some, but I've learned that it doesn't do any good to walk around guilt-ridden with my head hanging down. I did that for several years before coming to Christ and many brought it to my attention. Today, I'm not going to torture myself with my past. Although I look at the crime through the eyes of the victims, I also look at myself through the eyes of God — forgiven. I'm still ashamed of what I did, but as I draw close to God, I'm able to walk in the light and power of what He has done for me.

Q: Do you really feel at peace about your past?

God's Word tells us to let the peace that comes from God rule in our hearts. I had no other place to turn for peace. How could I ever find peace anywhere else? Everyone, including God, hates what I did, but He was the only one offering peace.

If I looked at my past in my own mind, I could never come to peace. What I did was horrific and unforgivable in my mind. But, as I continue to let the peace of God rule my heart, there is peace. I find that continually singing choruses and spiritual songs to God with thankfulness is the secret to keeping my heart in peace.

Q: How do you deal with the fact that so many people don't forgive you?

It's not hard, now that I know I have been accepted by God. It still hurts, but I understand where it comes from; so I don't take it personally. I've built up my identity as a Christian, seeing myself as God sees me, as a new creation in His righteousness, so what other people think makes little difference. I know who I am in Christ, what I have from Him, and what I can do. I am sound and walk strong in his forgiveness.

I find it harder to deal with those people who look at me as some sort of celebrity — those looking for an autograph. It's sort of a turn-off to see people looking at me or at what I did as someone or something special. I feel repulsed by what I did, and I find it hard at times to meet the public. I'm thankful that my Christian family treats me in a completely different way.

Q: What do you say to people who say, "I can forgive you, but I can never forget"?

I can certainly understand that statement. I'm so thankful that God remembers my sins no more. He says He has tossed them into the sea of forgetfulness. So many people carry unforgettable thoughts around.

This shows me the difference in the way we humans think versus God's way of thinking. He even says our thoughts are not His and His are not ours, and that His thoughts are higher than ours. We all find it hard to forget. I justify not forgiving by not wanting someone to hurt me again, but I know I need to grow out of this weakness. By His grace we can forget.

Q: You mentioned earlier that the daughter of one of your victims forgave you. Can you tell us more about that?

I told you how she wrote me for a year without telling me it was her mom and stepfather I had killed. She found out I was really changed, so she came from New Mexico to tell me who her parents were and to forgive me. It was a miraculous event with the anointing of God all over us.

I completely devastated her life; it was an unbearable loss. I caused her great emotional and even physical pain. Her children were hurt as well, growing up without grandparents. She had become a Christian, and the Lord made it clear that she was to come and forgive me in person. This started a tremendous healing process for us both, but it also brought a lot of persecution for her.

It costs us much to follow the voice of God. It seems He never asks an easy thing of us. It's always more than we can do on our own power. It takes Calvary working in our lives, dying to ourselves, and being crucified with Christ by faith, which enables us to live this sacrificed life. The Lord had a message that he wanted to give to the world through Suzan and me, and the devil hated it.



Susan LaBerge sharing how she has come to forgive Charles, a clip from the documentary on Charles Watson entitled "Forgiven."

Q: I can only imagine how that affected both your lives. Any more specifics?

I can't speak for Suzan, but for myself, I got a clear picture, through the eyes of my victim, of the pain I had caused. A deep sorrow filled my heart. She never shared anything in anger, only in pure, unconditional love. What she did was humanly impossible; only God could have done it.

After many years, we were fortunate enough to have the opportunity to share our story on video. It's called *Forgiven: The Charles Watson Story*. It shares the miracle better than I'm able to do in this interview. Anyone can get the video from the ministry website. It's a great video and a powerful witness to share with friends.

Q: Would you like to ask for forgiveness from anyone in the event they read this interview?

Earlier, when you asked me this I think I declined, because I felt forgiveness was too much to ask for. Of course, I have already offered an apology, but it seems so shallow considering the devastation I caused in their lives. But yes, I would like to ask for forgiveness from all the families, friends and from anyone who was affected by my crime.

I pray that all I have been sharing is an expression of my deepest remorse. I feel I am helpless to do more. I'd like to ask the Tate, La Bianca, Sebring, Folger, Parent, and Frykowski families to please consider forgiving me for the horrible crime I committed against them. I pray that the power of God brings this to pass in our lives. I pray for my victims' loved ones, that their hearts would be comforted with the same comfort that I have been comforted with through Christ. I sincerely desire to hear from these families. I hope that anyone who has been personally affected by my crime would contact me, whether they forgive me or not. I believe that just sharing our hearts will start a healing process. We never know what the Lord will do if we just take the first step.

Q: What's kept you from reaching out and asking more people for forgiveness?

I've just always known that it is humanly impossible to forgive a person and that if the Lord desires that a person forgive me, He will place it upon their heart. I still believe this, but at the same time, I feel an obligation to reach out my hand. I'm willing to take the risk of having it slapped away.

I really don't want to be more offensive and create further damage. I have nothing to lose and everything to gain, but Lord knows I don't want to cause more pain. My intentions are pure.

Q: Charles, I hope you do receive forgiveness from those you've hurt, but aren't you asking them to take a liberal view on crime?

No, I don't think so. I'm talking about a Godly view, and He isn't liberal with sin, but merciful. His forgiveness is freely given to everyone; but to receive it, we must repent by turning from our sin to Him.

Recently, I read an article about the liberal view. It talked about several things: the charitable attitude we have toward teenage pregnancies. An advisor to former President Clinton was caught up in a prostitute related scandal, yet he was back to work within a few months. A prominent TV sports announcer was involved in a lurid sexual adventure and was rehired to a radio broadcast position. The polls show how much our past President benefited from the public's willingness to forgive, whether or not he repented of his sexual affairs, Whitewater financial dealings, fudging in his dealings with the draft, smoking pot, etc.

This is the liberal view: a life lived in compromise. In today's society, all sins aren't against the laws of the country. In the Old Testament, adultery and many other sins called for the death penalty, but God in His mercy reversed that penalty through Jesus Christ. But if we approve of sins such as these, we will exemplify that it's okay to our children. As we confess our unbelief to

God and turn from our sin to Him, we're promised forgiveness and hope of forgiveness from one another.

Q: Can you clarify what you mean when you ask victims' families to forgive?

This is why I've hesitated to ask my victims' families to forgive me. I knew that I'd be asking more from them than is within their ability to give. But I pray they would know that God desires to give them the ability to forgive, and that it is for their good and for their healing.

I also pray they would recognize that forgiveness for the sinner is freely paid for by God. It's something we can't earn or pay for ourselves. This helps us to overcome our attempt to ensure that offenders “pay” for their offenses against us.

See, forgiveness means giving up the desire to punish the one who has offended us. I'm not saying we're to make light of the injury; rather, we're to fully acknowledge the cost of the injury. Then, by God's grace at work in us, we cancel the debt in order for the healing process to take place.

I'm asking that the victims' families draw near to Christ, and allow Him to bear the pain of my offense. This doesn't mean they should overlook or accept the wrongful behavior, or that punishment in prison should end, but that by forgiving they can be healed, and recover. As a result, this cancerous, unforgiving spirit will not be able to hurt us any longer.

Prisoners

Q: Let's talk about prisoners. Who are our prisoners today?



Charles and the Chapel Staff, who he ministered with in the late 1970's.

Our jail and prison population is more than 2 million people. These are men, women and children of every race who have lost the battle between darkness and light. Prisoners have yielded to the dark forces of this world and have finally succumbed to them. They arrive in prison as losers in total defeat, ruin and failure. Most arrive broken-down, depressed and rejected, looking for any sign of hope. They cry at night in their beds when no one can see them. Others try to act tough, putting on a front; but in reality, they have a heart full of pain and addiction.

Many of these prisoners come from good families, but the majority comes from broken homes where they were emotionally and physically abused. Others were born out of wedlock, never having known a father figure. They come from every background imaginable, but all of them have one thing in common — a rebellious and prideful heart. Each prisoner arrives dragging their baggage of torment that comes from deep behavioral problems — spiritual, mental and emotional. They are in deep need of a heart transplant and a long process of recovery, but most don't recognize it.

Prisoners are no different from anyone else who is imprisoned by dark forces. Mankind is a slave to sin. Some just haven't been caught. They are owned by and in bondage to their own self-destruction. Millions are being destroyed and imprisoned without even knowing it.

Q: You're saying the childhoods of most prisoners are lacking in spirituality, right?

Exactly. Children are being raised in a society filled with violence, with little emphasis on spirituality. Their lives are busy with education, sports and a variety of lessons. These are all good things, but God and the parent/child relationship are missing.

In my case, I had a faulty belief system. I believed my acceptance and self-worth were based upon my performance. I felt rejected when I didn't live up to expectations. As a result, I rejected my parents and became rebellious.

While growing up, most prisoners were not guided toward a relationship with God. I find that the majority of prisoners didn't come from Christian families, and when they have, they've rejected the God of their parents. Regardless, most children wonder about God, and as parents we have the perfect opportunity to fill that need. If we don't encourage them to fill that void with the Holy Spirit, they will be left open as prey for every demonic spirit.

Children should know that God created them and loves them. They will learn to love and trust Him as they see us exemplify Christ. As we give them our time, listen, pray for them and love them unconditionally, they'll know they are loved. They'll feel secure and accepted, demonstrating obedience and trust. It's the lack of these things that breeds damaged children, often ending up in prison.

Q: What are some of the behavioral problems of prisoners?

Their problems are really no different from anyone else's. Just because there is a fence between the prisoner and society, it doesn't make their problems different. When these childhood problems are not dealt with properly, the resulting pain is temporarily medicated with illicit sex, illegal drugs and the like. Their unhealthy desires due to wrong beliefs create the crime problem — drug abuse, child molestation, rape, murder and more.

These problems include a lack of personal identity, causing them to judge others harshly, get angry and gossip. Others isolate themselves, fearing everyone, especially the guards. Some are big-time approval seekers and become extremely loyal to gangs. Many are easily intimidated by the controlling bullies and become overly sensitive, taking psychotropic drugs and sometimes committing suicide. Most don't choose to know and serve a caring God; instead they choose other unhealthy prisoners for friends.

Most prisoners are in denial, not willing to look at why they came to prison. They blame the system, minimize their involvement and repress their feelings. They have not dealt with their own fear, anger, guilt or pain. They can't even imagine the pain they've caused others. As a result, prisoners are fairly impulsive, unstable, undisciplined and lack relationship skills. They have no direction or goals for the future. And, I'm sad to say most are turned loose upon society without going through any rehabilitation or recovery process while in prison.

Q: How does a person in prison start this recovery process?

A person doesn't have to be incarcerated to start this process. Those who are incarcerated are more likely to have had a rude awakening. Some see they need help because of their circumstances. This has been called jailhouse religion, but in actuality, we all come into the world as prisoners to our sin and turn to God in tough times. We're born going the wrong direction, depending on our surroundings to supply our need.

Most people have heard the Genesis story of the fall of mankind, and how God created Adam and Eve perfect in the Garden of Eden, with authority to rule the Earth. They really had it made in their relationship with God, but were deceived by Satan. Unbelief and disobedience then came into the world. They became prisoners, that is, in bondage to sin by nature, passing this to all mankind. As a result, man took control, deciding right from wrong instead of looking to God, trusting in His wisdom and understanding.

The first step to recovery is to have our sin nature changed. Instead of being born of sin, we must be born of God, or born-again. Jesus Christ came to make this possible through redemption — His death, burial and resurrection. He defeated sin and death and poured out the Holy Spirit from heaven to give us His divine nature. We take on a new, incorruptible nature, unlike that old fallen corruptible nature which propelled us toward destruction. This new nature in right standing with God is what propels us towards righteous actions.

Q: So, you're saying that we're all prisoners to Satan, until we are born-again, right?

That's right. You can call him Lucifer, Satan, or the devil, but he's the jailer. Jesus Christ went into Satan's slave market of sin and purchased us by His blood so the enemy could no longer have power over us. When we receive what Jesus did for us on the cross, we are purchased by God and become His property, given a new life. We're not only forgiven. We're accepted, made right with God, just as if we had never sinned. We are deeply loved, children of God, overcomers and more. We aren't the devil's property any longer — Jesus Christ frees us.

Q: Does this mean we no longer have a problem with sinful behavior?

No, the enemy never gives up. The archangel, Lucifer, and a third of God's angels were cast to Earth because of Lucifer's pride and rebellion in heaven. Those angels became the demons. They're behind all the troublesome rebellion we see in this world. The demons are after our minds on a daily basis. They're out to take prisoner all who will listen to them. They constantly cause turmoil within our minds. Satan lies to us about God and our relationship with Him, and other people. He is out to rob our love for God and one another. He is out to destroy relationships.

As we understand God's love for us and come into a right relationship with Him, our proper relationship with others will fall into place. We no longer allow the enemy's thoughts to take us prisoner. Our desires begin to change as we take a stand for truth. The secret is to rule our hearts with God's Word — His voice, instead of listening to the demonic voice. We take authority over demonic thinking through the knowledge of our righteousness, by faith in the cross of Calvary.

We, then, are no longer tossed around, believing in delusional thinking. As our identity takes shape in Christ, we're quick to cast down every argument that the demons bring. In our relationships, we stop taking troublesome problems personally. Instead, we recognize the common enemy and take control of our fleshly thoughts. Our emotional life becomes stable and filled with love; turned away from anger, resentment, fear and harmful, childish behavior. This is called the renewing of the mind.

Q: Do you see many prisoners turning to God for recovery?

The number of people turning to God in prison is no greater than that of society. It's true that people focus more on God in times of hardship, but our whole society is in a time of difficulty like no other time in history. The Lord is saying, "Wake up." But many of us are saying, "Just let me sleep a little longer." The Lord has a time and season to deal with each of us so that we may be rescued from destruction. He gives us the faith to be saved, and He waits for us to receive our salvation.

Many prisoners have finally awoken to the fact that their lives are unmanageable. They've admitted that only God can restore them, and they've made a decision to turn their lives over to Him. I minister to men who have lost all hope, some in prison for life — they've struck out. Man has no hope to offer, so these men take Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior. They become born-again of the Spirit, receive eternal life and begin the healing process.

I see many men in denial develop honesty, by acknowledging their terrible past. Many are putting their foot down and refusing to listen to the lies of the enemy any longer — they're taking charge of their selfish lives. Men are dealing with their jealousy and sexual behavior. I see men who once were impulsive and impatient, walking in gratitude and patience. Others are admitting their pride and rebellion and learning to walk in humility and love. Anger, fear, intolerance and criticism are being replaced by acceptance, trust and love. As they renew their minds to God's way of thinking, this character-building process takes place.

Q: You're saying that being born-again and going through a Christ centered recovery process is the answer for rehabilitating prisoners, right?

Rehabilitation means to reinstate, to make good or useable again. Most prisoners have never been good or useable in life. I believe prisoners need to be regenerated; that is, changed from the inside out. They need to be formed or created again spiritually. This can only happen through being born-again of the Holy Spirit.

Recently, I read material from the Kairos prison ministry that a leading criminologist, Dr. Peter P. Legins, of the University of Maryland said, "I have known for many years, as have most of the leading criminologists in this country, that the greatest hope for an inmate to avoid the revolving doors of our prisons is to undergo a religious conversion experience during his or her incarceration."

I agree, but this must include a Christ-centered recovery process, not support groups that develop sin consciousness. Too many prisoners receive Christ only to proclaim a self-righteous doctrine of fleshly works. Others cover their sin with legalism, thinking they've arrived, and never

allowing God's love to heal those character flaws that brought them to prison. Regardless, the born-again experience lays the foundation and provides the power of the Holy Spirit to search out the heart and renew the mind, power to change one's desires and heal deep emotional scars. This process of sanctification takes years, but if it starts in prison and continues upon release, an inmate will stay out of prison.

Q: Do prisoners serve God with the proper motive or are they just doing it to get out of prison?

I don't believe prisoners in the western United States think that by carrying a Bible, it's going to get them out earlier. I do believe as we renew our mind with God's word and become true to it, His perfect will takes place for our lives. Most prisoners' sentences are set and others go to the parole board, but healing through Christ is looked on less favorably than psychiatric treatment or being involved in secular therapy groups. In the Bible-belt area of the United States, I feel Christ is more likely to be recognized as the answer, but prisoners still do their time, and some are even put to death for their crime while professing Christ.

I see fewer than 10% of inmates boldly professing Christ, but a larger percentage are closet believers. I see committed men coming to God addicted and imprisoned with pain, being forgiven, healed and comforted. I see men serving God, respecting the authorities and helping other inmates, whereas those who don't, cause most of the trouble. The correctional officers can't help but see this, but inmates don't get out of prison any earlier whatever their motive may be, unless God intervenes supernaturally. They see Christ as the answer to staying out of prison. They get filled with the Spirit and experience love, joy and peace, and can't help but tell others about their new life.

The Holy Spirit working through Christian inmates actually restrains sin in prison and helps to keep peace among the inmates. I find that almost every inmate is willing to accept a Bible upon arriving in prison. Christ said He came not to call the righteous to repentance, but the sinner. We must thank God for our Chapel programs, volunteers and Christian inmates. They are very important to America's justice system.

Q: That's very interesting. Can you elaborate on how the Holy Spirit restrains sin in prison through Christian inmates?

Christian inmates have relationship skills that others don't — they are the peacemakers. They help the system more than is recognized. They work in all areas of the institution and live throughout the housing units. They're not segregated in one place, so they're able to serve those around them with their new character.

Of course, their prayers help to keep peace, but Christian inmates are givers. They give toiletries to those who don't have funds to provide for themselves. They give out Bibles and materials, sharing Christ and inviting others to fellowship. And those who don't know Christ see Christ in those who do, and go to them with their problems for counsel. They need to be shown that God loves them.

As Christian inmates walk in the light of God, darkness is exposed and men are convicted of their sinful lives. Instead of the demons who used to traffic in their lives of darkness, the angels of God traffic with the Saints of light, to protect and do battle for them. The presence of God becomes evident as we actually see God's mighty power and grace at work.

Q: I've heard people who visit in prison say that Christian inmates are freer than most people on the outside. How could this be?

That's what I've been talking about. Once prisoners get born-again, receive forgiveness and begin the recovery process, they learn to deal with the fear, resentment, anger, etc., that caused their pain. Many on the streets haven't dealt with any of these relationship problems. They're still medicating their pain with drugs, sex and other vices.

Prisoners have been stopped in their tracks and given the choice to deal with what put them in prison — themselves. They see they have yielded to temptations and it is time to wake up from their sleep and take authority over their lives in Christ. They receive new freedom by believing and receiving the Truth — Jesus Christ.

Q: Are you a prison-reform activist?

I'm not called into politics, if that's what you mean. I don't fight the system legally, but in a spiritual sense — on a higher level. I believe that a personal relationship with Jesus Christ is the answer to our crime problem. I guess you could call me an activist, although I urge action toward our common enemy — the devil, not individuals. I'm called to do battle in the spiritual realm. It's not an earthly battle.

Don't get me wrong. I see no wrong in actively pursuing prison reform in a peaceful fashion. I am just not called into this form of service. All I have is a testimony given to me by Jesus Christ, and I'm called to boldly share it by example. I would be going off course if I were to travel in any other direction.

Q: We hear that the justice system is all about punishment these days, not rehabilitation. Any comment?

That's true. The purpose of prison is punishment, not rehabilitation. The majority of society is crying out for justice; as a result, punishment is favored. Justice has come to mean only punishment. It's easier to punish children than to train them. We like instant problem solving: abortion on demand, no fault divorce, and the like. It takes work to raise children and stay married. It takes the same to have a successful prison system.

We see people retaliating in vengeance. We've talked about this extensively, but punishment is defined Biblically as vengeance. In the New Testament, in the light of the cross of Jesus, we see justice come into balance. This justice includes grace and mercy and doing what is right.

What's lacking is chastising. It completes the meaning of justice as it is carried out with grace and mercy, for the purpose of restoration and correction. Chastising suggests training with grace, which brings reproof, admonishment and healing. As a result, one becomes responsible and disciplined. This brings forth character to live in society, as opposed to expulsion and rejection

from society. This is what the recovery process is all about — chastisement, because 95% of the prisoners will be released one day.

Q: We hear of children killing other children. What's missing in the children's lives that cause them to become our prisoners?

It seems these children always have problems at home. They feel abandoned and betrayed by adults. They end up adrift without proper guidance or purpose — raising themselves. They have nobody to confide in, and to them, society has let them down.

These are our prisoners of tomorrow. If they are not nurtured at home, our prison system is expected to raise them — to teach them right from wrong and the consequences of their actions. Most of these children come from abusive homes. They were teased and failed in school, and some are even impaired; but they all lack one thing — unconditional love. I believe the fantasies found in violent television, movies, satanic rock music and video games numb our children to a proper understanding of reality. Also, pent-up anger, isolation and the availability of firearms is a lethal mixture resulting in death.

Our children need to be born-again at an early age and Biblically raised with an understanding of faith righteousness. This includes Christian schooling, attending a Bible-believing Church, praying together as a family, and having responsibilities. They need a loving relationship and time with both parents, not legalism. It is important for them to have other Christian children as friends. There must be proper discipline and supervision, without overreacting to their need for independence.

Q: Charles, you've been in prison over four decades. How do you do it?

The Bible says in Proverbs, “*Where there is no vision, the people perish, but he that keepeth the law, happy is he*” (29:18). The word vision means redemptive revelation of God. I see Jesus Christ as that redemptive revelation; He paid the price for our sins.

My life has only one purpose; that is to testify to prisoners and to the world that Christ died for the sins of everyone. There's not a week goes by that I don't hear someone say, “If God can forgive you, He can forgive me, too.”

This is how I do it. I keep it simple, and I live to serve the Lord. I believe we're in the last days, and if we're going to make a difference in the Kingdom of God, we need to be busy with our Father's business. Sure, I miss my family deeply, but, as I, “...turn my eyes on Jesus, the things of Earth grow strangely dim.” I've learned to be more others-centered, instead of so self-centered.

Q: Do you have any thoughts about our parole system?

I see the wrong inmates being released, ones who will return. They go out in the same condition they arrived because their time is up. They were not required to go through a recovery training process. Those inmates whose lives are truly changed because of faith-based recovery, don't get paroled, but they have committed harsher crimes.

I'd like to see our country turn to God for revival and as a result, see our prison authorities call for repentance from all prisoners. I hear people crying, "Separation of Church and State," but we need to invite God into our nation and prisons to solve our crime problem. Repentance could never be a requirement for release from prison, but the truth is, through repentance, the shackles fall off our lives. I see the possibility of revival taking place in prison first and then spreading out into society.

Q: How do we know that someone won't get out of prison and do the same things again?

Only God knows a man's heart, but His Word says we know them by their fruit. That is, we're known by our own works. The Lord's brother, James says, "*Faith that doesn't show itself by good deeds is no faith at all — it is dead and useless*" (2:17, NLT). Our works reveal the condition of our heart. If a person's works are consistent for years and they're walking in humility, they're more likely to succeed on parole. If they're contentious, proud and unstable in prison, they're more likely to fail. It would be like the Proverb, "*As a dog returns to his vomit, so a fool returns to his folly*" (Proverbs 26:11).

For example, I would never return to my folly. I have God's very best, total satisfaction in Him and in doing His work. My foundation for life is based on the Rock. Daily, I build on this foundation by renewing my mind with God's Word and walking in agreement with His work on the cross. I have a totally new identity based on this great news, and can't help but share it.

Q: How do you explain violent crime decreasing since we locked up more with the new "Three Strikes Law"?

We can only afford to do this so long. Ninety-five percent of prisoners get out of prison and 84% return. When prisoners return for the third time, they are kept for life. And there are more children beginning this cycle daily.

The "Three Strike Law" may have good intentions like the law of Moses, but the Apostle Paul concluded after being saved: "*The law of Moses could not save us, because of our sinful nature. But God put into effect a different plan to save us. He sent his own Son in a human body like ours, except that ours are sinful. God destroyed sin's control over us by giving his Son as a sacrifice for our sins. He did this so that the requirement of the law would be fully accomplished for us who no longer follow our sinful nature but instead follow the Spirit*" (Romans 8:3, 4, NLT).

The law was given so man would avoid falling under the curse of sin, but it could not make man complete, and it won't solve our crime problem today. The decrease in the crime problem that we see won't last without a revival in our land. This revival will have to take place in the hearts of each individual, beginning with the head of every household.

I'd like to give a battle cry for all families to take a stand for righteousness. This righteousness is received freely through identifying ourselves with the cross of Jesus Christ. He gives us the power to lead our households through His grace and ability. As we sow this message of Good News into our families, they will rise up in His righteousness and prevail over sin.

Q: Many citizens think prisoners have it too good and want to take everything away from them. Can't this backfire?

I have said often that the tougher we get on crime, the tougher it will get on us. Most of these prisoners that you are getting tough on will get out of prison at least one more time. If society has shown no mercy, it can't expect to receive mercy. It's time to sow mercy into America's justice system. What we sow, we will reap.

The move now is to take away television and radios that the prisoners have purchased with their own funds. This is the prisoner's only way to touch the outside world other than collect telephone calls, periodicals and limited visits. The prison guards believe these items are necessary to keep the peace and give the prisoner something to do.

Yes, I think it will backfire. It's another form of vengeance and retaliation. This is the opposite of what Jesus Christ calls for, that is to visit the prisoner. He said, *"Inasmuch as you have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, you have done it to me"* (Matthew 25:40). It's time to ask ourselves, "What would Jesus do?"

Q: I hear of the criminals retaliating in vengeance against law enforcement. Have you heard about this?

Yes, I did hear recently that criminals are stalking and retaliating against officials. I hope we don't see more of these evil acts. But if vengeance continues to be sown, it will be reaped by society.

It has been said that, "No amount of inhumane treatment is going to right the wrong or the harm done to victims of crime." But inhumane treatment is likely to perpetuate the cycle of crime that all of us want to stop.

We must come to the place where we can show mercy. This is humanly impossible. That's why we need revival in our nation, so we can be empowered by God to serve in righteousness. We must be empowered to enforce the law by the power of God, who requires us *"...to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God"* (Micah 6:8).

It's time to humble ourselves before God and pray, and seek His face, and turn from our wicked ways; then the Lord promises to hear us from heaven, forgive our sin and heal our land.

Q: What about prison gangs. Do you know anything about them?

Most gangs were started inside prisons and moved to the streets. There are gangs of every race and color and many different gangs within each race. They're all at war with one another for their turf — their piece of the Earth.

I'm no authority on gangs, although the Manson family had a sort of gang mentality. People who join gangs lack their own identity and are very much in need of acceptance. Peer pressure rules their lives. They cry, "Give me my respect, or I'll take it." Pride, rebellion and anger rage through their hearts because of many wrong beliefs and ideas they grew up around. As a result, they have brought much pain to others and to themselves. They have a spiritual void that can only be filled by the God who created them. As these gang members trust Jesus Christ as the

answer, they take on a new identity. They have a new value system and experience true remorse, acceptance and most of all, forgiveness for their sin.

Thousands of gang members are coming to Christ in and out of prison. They are becoming new creations in Christ, and for the first time, receiving respect as men and women of God. In short, they are taking their lives back from the enemy, who has killed many of their friends.

Q: Do prisoners still get drugs in prison?

Sure, the drug problem is big in prison. The prison life is very painful, and prisoners will do almost anything to get drugs. They believe drugs will bring satisfaction, but in reality, they're only medicating their emotional pain.

Most prisoners have developed an addictive lifestyle. We've talked a lot about their destructive vices. I believe Jesus Christ is our number-one painkiller, and every prisoner just needs to take the "Gos-pill." They need to be free from the bondage of their broken lives.

Q: What is the Christian recovery training process?

This process is simply a grace group. Dr. James Richards of Impact Ministries defines grace as "God's ability working in man, making him able to do what he cannot do in his own ability." Prisoners see that only God can change their nature, that trusting in the law, or in their own fleshly abilities cannot keep them out of prison. The power to change comes from God's ability working in us through faith in Christ.

They recover by coming to believe in the love of God, Who made them righteous by the finished work of the cross. They take on a new view of the world, themselves and others in light of their redemption. As a result, they see healing and the ability to live a disciplined life come forth by the power of the Holy Spirit.

Q: What can you say to encourage people to volunteer in prison ministry?

Very often, I hear prison ministry volunteers say, "I get more out of this ministry than the prisoner." I can tell from their countenance that they're receiving great blessings from the Lord. I also see the sacrifice they make each week by traveling long distances and spending time away from their families. It certainly is a labor of love.

I'd encourage everyone to pray and ask the Lord if He would have you be involved in prison ministry. You may not go personally into prison chapels, but you may be called to visit one-on-one and make a disciple. You can also provide funds for others to bring materials, books, cassettes and videos to prisoners and chaplains. You can volunteer in a pen pal ministry, and especially, pray for those who minister to prisoners.

Whatever you are called to do, act today! Your acts bring restoration to the prisoner, and your part helps to solve the crime problem. Your efforts could help turn the penal system right side up.

Q: How and when did you become involved in prison ministry?

I've been involved in prison ministry for almost three decades. After being born-again, I went to work in the prison chapel. I grew up in the Lord while working there for twelve years. It was a

full training ministry covering every aspect of church life. I eventually became an ordained minister.

In 1979, a non-profit outreach called Abounding Love Ministries, Inc. was born. This became necessary in order to answer all the requests for my book, *Will You Die For Me?* We make it available free to prisoners and chaplains.

I've heard every story there is, but it all comes down to a prisoner acknowledging their sin that causes pain and turning to Christ. When a prisoner truly understands that he is placed in right standing with God by faith in the cross of Christ alone, he will go on to grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. Over the years, I've learned that the revelation of faith righteousness propels a person into a lifestyle of righteous living, but works righteousness keeps a person in sin consciousness. The heart of our ministry is solely the finished work of Christ, Who made us acceptable to God at the cross.

Salvation

Q: Is Satan responsible for man's need to be saved?

No, Satan is not the one to blame; man is responsible for his choice to sin. Adam decided not to trust God. He turned his back on God's command to not eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. He broke a loving relationship with God. He humbled himself to the lying words of the serpent; therefore sin, unbelief, fear, lust and death passed upon the entire human race.

Satan is the tempter. He is also called the adversary, oppressor, deceiver, thief, accuser of the brethren, prince of the power of the air, destroyer, defamer, and father of lies. In these last days, we're told that *"...some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils"* (1 Timothy 4:1).

The heart, the inside of man, is desperately wicked, and the Lord hates it, but He loves the sinner. God is not angry at you! He has desired a relationship with man ever since Adam failed in the garden. If you're not born-again, you must receive Christ into your heart to be free from your Adamic, sinful nature. You'll then become a child of God, having fellowship with Him, your heavenly Father.

The Bible says, *"You used to live just like the rest of the world, full of sin, obeying Satan, the mighty prince of the power of the air. He is the spirit at work in the hearts of those who refuse to obey God. All of us used to live that way, following the passions and desires of our evil nature. We were born with an evil nature, and we were under God's anger just like everyone else"* (Ephesians 2:2, 3, NLT).

Q: Can you tell us more of what the Bible says about the condition of the heart of mankind?

When the Psalmist David repented of his sin of adultery, he said, *"Behold, I was shaped in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me"* (Psalm 51:5). We're born desperately wicked in need of a Savior. Jesus said, *"For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornication, thefts, false witness, blasphemies: These are the things which defile a man"* (Matthew 15:19, 20). Jesus said to the religious people of the day, *"...outwardly you appear righteous unto men, but within, you are full of hypocrisy and iniquity"* (Matthew 23:28).

I was my own worst enemy. Yes, I had yielded to Satan's plan for me, but my own sinful flesh, full of unbelief, pride and rebellion was the root problem. *"But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed"* (James 1:14).

It's easy for some of us to admit we're sinners, but for others it's hard, especially for those who have lived good lives. Whether we've lived good or bad lives isn't the problem, but that sinful nature we're all born with is the problem. The Scripture says, *"For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God"* (Romans 3:23). It's not about being good enough in order to enter the kingdom of heaven. The requirement is to be perfectly righteous, and we all miss the mark in God's eyes.

In the Old Testament, the children of Israel showed how totally helpless they were when it came to their ability to keep the law of God. They ended up breaking all of God's commandments and found themselves in bondage to the heathen nations around them. The

inability to keep the law shows us our sinfulness and our need for a Savior. The Lord shows us the need and solution through the prophet Jeremiah saying, “...*I will put my law into their inward parts and write it in their heart; and will be their God, and they shall be my people*” (Jeremiah 31:33). For this to happen, we must be born-again.

Q: So, you're saying man must receive Christ or continue in sin?

That's right, both the Old and New Testaments encourage us to serve the Lord. Heaven is a free gift from God. We have nothing to lose and everything to gain by receiving Christ. We can't get to heaven without Him, and hell hangs in the balance.

The lyrics of one of Bob Dylan's songs goes, “...You're gonna have to serve somebody; well, it may be the devil, or it may be the Lord, but you're gonna have to serve somebody.” In the Bible, Joshua said, “...*choose you this day whom you will serve; whether the gods which your father served...but as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord...God forbid that we should forsake the Lord to serve other gods*” (Joshua 24:15, 16). And the Apostle Paul said, “...behold, now is the day of salvation” (2 Corinthians 6:2).

The problem is our desperately wicked heart. It's not capable of choosing to serve God. It's God who gives us the ability to serve Him. The trouble is that the gods of this world have blinded the minds of them that don't believe. But God gives us the faith to believe in Him. As Christians, we call this saving faith. Without the Holy Spirit coming upon us to show us our unbelief and sparking faith and a desire for God, we would never make that choice. We owe it all to God for this salvation. He is merciful and doesn't want to punish man. But at the same time, He is a just God and will surely punish sin, for the wages of sin is death.

Q: Do you believe that anyone can be saved, regardless of the crime committed?

Yes, I am proof of this fact. If God can save me, anoint my life with His Holy Spirit and give me a ministry to the world, He can save anyone, no matter how bad. Listen, “*We are made right in God's sight when we trust in Jesus Christ to take away our sins. And we all can be saved in the same way, no matter who we are or what we have done*” (Romans 3:22, NLT).

The word salvation means to rescue from destruction, to deliver from sin and death and to liberate from the bondage of Satan. It also means being healed spiritually of our sin nature, being healed physically and to preserve and to give health. This salvation produces soundness and makes us victors in Christ.

The prophet Jeremiah talks about drinking out of two cisterns; one full of living water and the other broken, unable to hold water. The Apostle Paul talks of drinking out of two cups; the cup of the Lord and the cup of devils. All of my life I drank out of the devil's cup. I walked in the evil imaginations of my heart, but one day the Lord came to me and showed me the wickedness of my heart. It was clear that I needed to be rescued and He threw me a lifeline. I grabbed it and held on for dear life.

Remember, there are no failures in life except people who give up too soon. I have personally seen men come to Christ who have committed every crime in the book. They have taken all the bridges to Babylon on their way to destruction, but God's goodness brings them to repentance. In

other words, they turn from their unbelief, to God, who is “...not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance” (2 Peter 3:9).

Q: You spoke of the bridges to Babylon earlier. Can you refresh my memory on what that has to do with sin and judgment?

Babylon represents the world system. It is called “...*Mystery Babylon the Great, the mother of harlots and abominations of the Earth*” in Revelation 17:5. God will judge this world system of pride, confusion, lust, pleasure and sorcery.

In Revelation 18:23, 24, the Lord says, “...*for by thy sorceries were all nations deceived. And in her was found the blood of the prophets and of saints, and of all that were slain upon the Earth.*” At this time, God will avenge the blood of the Apostles and prophets. The purpose of the world system headed up by Lucifer has always been to kill, steal and to destroy the purpose of God on Earth.

All we have to do is read the end of the Bible and we find out that we win. In Revelation 21:7, 8 the Lord says, “*He that overcomes shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be My son. But the fearful, the unbelieving, the abominable, the murderers, the whore-mongers, the sorcerers, the idolaters, and all liars shall have their part in the lake of fire.*” The latter are those who have rejected Christ's payment for their sins on the cross of Calvary.

Q: What must we do in order to be saved?

The Philippian jailer asked the same question. Paul and Silas replied, “*Believe on the Lord Jesus and you will be saved...*” (Acts 16:31, NLT). Our good works cannot save us, only believing can. The Word says, “*For by grace we are saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast*” (Ephesians 2:8, 9).

We are given the gift of righteousness when we are born again. Our performance does not save us, only the performance of Christ at Calvary. God loved us so much that He sent His only Son, Jesus Christ, the sinless Savior, to die on the cross in our place. We deserved death for our sin, but He paid the price instead, by His sacrifice. The Bible says, “*For God made Christ, who never sinned, to be the offering for our sin, so that we could be made right with God through Christ*” (2 Corinthians 5:21, NLT). The LORD is our righteousness (Jeremiah 23:6).

All we must do is embrace the cross. The Scriptures tell us, “*But as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name*” (John 1:12). We must trust in and rely on what He did for us — this is faith. We must have faith that His blood on the cross purchased us from being Satan's slaves. He cleansed us, and by His resurrection conquered sin, bringing us into God's presence. This is true revival, a renewal of life — a supernatural rebirth.

Romans 10:9, 10 says, “*If we confess with our mouth the Lord Jesus and shall believe in our heart that God has raised Him from the dead, we shall be saved. For with the heart, man believes unto righteousness and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.*” The word confession means “to say the same thing” as God says about our sin and about His solution for sin. As we declare Jesus LORD by acknowledging His death on the cross for our sins, and His resurrection from the dead to give us life, we'll be saved.

In other words, a great exchange took place. The wrath of God for sin that you deserved was put on Christ. God poured out all of His judgment on Jesus. He was judged and found guilty for us; crucified, died and buried. Our old man is dead, the new man in His righteousness is alive. The righteousness of God that only Christ deserved was placed upon you. You became right with God in the Spirit. In His death, the old you died and was buried with Him. In His resurrection, the new you arose and lives in and with Him victoriously. Salvation happens supernaturally by grace through faith, as God miraculously brings us to life, by taking up residence in our hearts. This is called the mystery of God, "...*Christ in us, the hope of glory*" (Colossians 1:27).

Q: Where does the blood of Jesus Christ fit into the salvation message?

God has always dealt with sin by a blood sacrifice. In the Old Testament it was by the yearly sacrifice of animals in the temple. Their blood only covered sin, but today, the blood of Jesus Christ cleanses us completely of the original sin nature as the Holy Spirit regenerates our spirit. The writer of Hebrews says, "...*without shedding of blood there is no forgiveness of sins*" (Hebrews 9:22, NLT).

The revelation of the blood of Christ is most important to the Christian life. We are the temple of God today; He dwells in us as born-again believers. Our voice is to speak of the blood sacrifice that forgives sin. In Revelation 12:10-12, we hear a loud voice shouting across the heavens. "*It has happened at last – the salvation and power and kingdom of our God, and the authority of his Christ! For the Accuser has been thrown down to earth — the one who accused our brothers and sisters before our God day and night. And they have defeated him because of the blood of the Lamb and because of their testimony. And they were not afraid to die. Rejoice, O heavens, rejoice! But terror will come on the earth and the sea. For the Devil has come down to you in great anger, and he knows that he has little time*" (NLT).

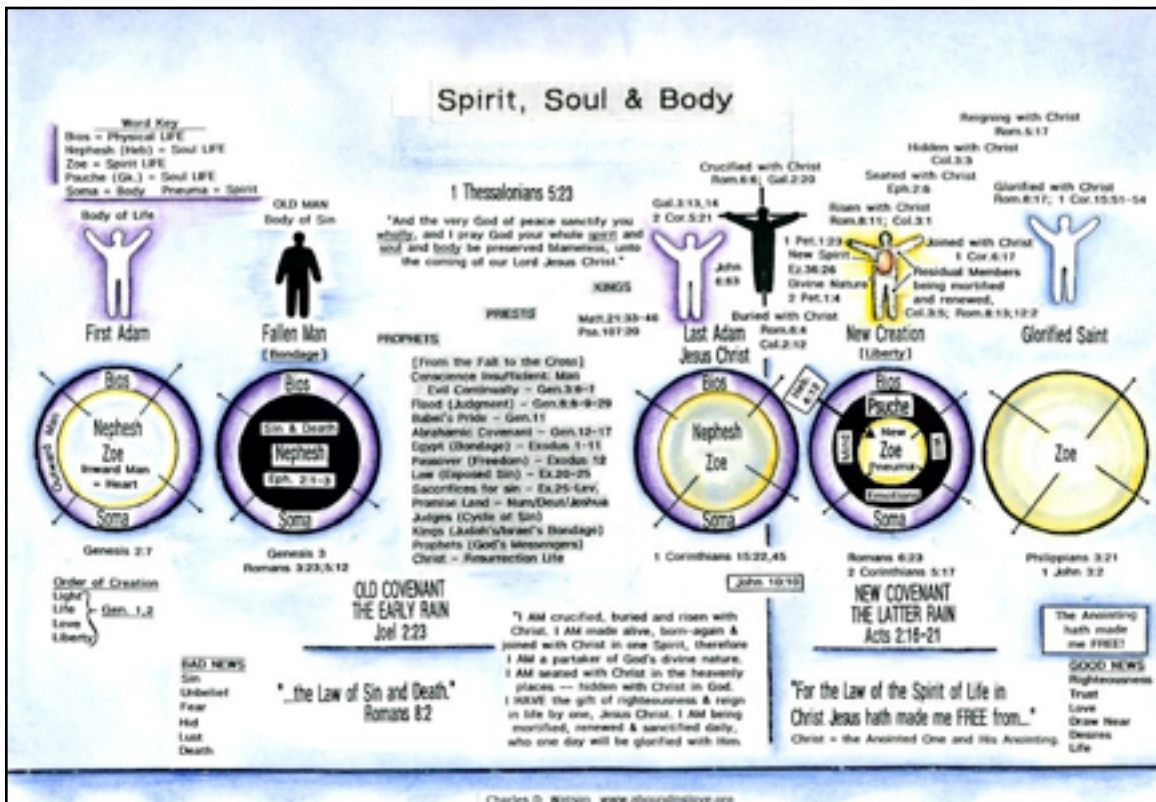
Our voice is to ring loud with the testimony of the blood always upon our lips, overcoming the devil who seeks to destroy the Saints. I suggest confessing the blood Scriptures aloud. For example, "The blood of Jesus has purchased me for God's purpose, the price has been paid for my sin by the blood; therefore, I am redeemed by the blood. I have been declared righteous, just as if I had never sinned, and I have peace with God by the blood of the Lamb. I am washed, cleansed, and made a priest of God by the blood of Jesus. He has sanctified me and given me boldness to enter into His presence by His own blood. Therefore, according to Revelation 12:11, I overcome the devil by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of my testimony. This is the voice of God, His Word.

Q: So, you're saying that our physical body becomes the Temple of God when we're saved, right?

Actually, the temple consists of more than just the body. We are a three-part being: spirit, soul and body. These three make up the temple. The spirit is part of the inner man that is regenerated by the Holy Spirit when we're born-again. We become participants of God's divine nature, and placed into His family. He now lives in us by the Holy Spirit. We are new creations, having received the sacrifice of Christ, empowered by God and given the ability to be renewed from the inside out.

The soul is the part of the inner man that needs renewal. It is made up of the mind, the will and the emotions. As the mind becomes renewed by choosing God's voice — His Word — our emotional life falls into place and the body is energized by the Spirit. The mind is where the battle with fleshly thoughts takes place. We are to cast down every demonic argument against the knowledge of God and bring every thought to the obedience of Christ.

The body is the outward part of man that houses the soul and the Holy Spirit. The life of the body is the Spirit. As Christians, we are the temple, or dwelling place of the Holy Spirit. The Apostle Paul speaks of our being in an “earthly tent” while earnestly longing for a heavenly house not made with hands. One day, Jesus “...shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto His glorious body” (Philippians 3:21). But until then, we “...are being changed into His image from glory to glory by the Spirit of the Lord” (2 Corinthians 3:18).



Spirit, Soul, & Body Chart

Q: What is the answer to living a successful Christian life?

A growing intimate relationship with Jesus Christ makes a successful Christian. We must trust solely in the strength of God's grace — His sufficiency, not our flesh, works or keeping a list of rules. At the cross, God manifested his willingness to use His power and ability on our behalf even though we don't deserve it.

We are to embrace the cross at all times, experiencing the love of God, which brings healing and success. This means taking every painful situation to the cross. Instead of rising up in our

flesh to handle grief and sorrow, we see ourselves joined to Christ and what He did for us. We let the peace that comes from Christ rule our hearts.

The Apostle Paul speaks of our new dignity and worth, *“Since you have heard all about Him and have learned the truth that is in Jesus, throw off your old evil nature and your former way of life, which is rotten through and through, full of lust and deception. Instead, there must be a spiritual renewal of your thoughts and attitudes. You must deeply display a new nature because you are a new person, created in God's likeness — righteous, holy, and true”* (Ephesians 4:21-24, NLT).

Our thoughts and attitudes must be renewed to our new identity in Christ. We are righteous, holy and true. We know who we are, what we have and what we can do in Christ. We are children of God, a royal priesthood, new creations, made right with God and accepted totally by Him. We have a new love, new life, the light of God and power to live this Christian life. We can do all things in Christ who strengthens us. Our God supplies all our needs according to His riches in Christ Jesus.

As our thoughts stay lined up with the reality of God's promises, the Holy Spirit will bring forth wholeness. The Spiritual mind is life and peace (Romans 8:7). Through prayer and meditation on the power of God demonstrated at the cross, the realization of our victory in Christ produces the fruit and gifts of the Holy Spirit. The love and glory of God is free to spring forth to all those around us. We are seen as vessels of gold and silver, manifesting glory and honor.

Q: But first we must be born-again to receive all you're talking about, right?

That's right, we must be born-again of the Spirit by acknowledging we are sinners. Heaven is a free gift. It is neither earned nor deserved. God loved us so much that He sent His Son, Jesus Christ, to take care of the sin problem with His blood. We must, by faith, accept His death on the cross in our place, His burial and His resurrection, which gives us new life. We must repent by now turning from our sin to God. It's as easy as telling God in prayer that you are trusting what Jesus Christ did on the cross of Calvary for you. It's not a prayer that saves you, but it's trusting in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. Would you like to pray now? If so, say:

“Dear God, I know I am a sinner. I renounce the works of Satan and all his ways. I know my sin deserves the punishment of death. I believe in my heart that Christ took my punishment. He died on the cross paying the price for my sin, was buried and raised from the dead. I trust Jesus alone as my Savior and confess Him as Lord. I give You my life, Jesus, and ask you to cleanse me from my sins and come into my heart. Be Lord, boss, over my life and make it pleasing to You. Make me a new creation and change me. Thank You for saving me. Amen.”

Now begin to thank God for making you His child. The Apostle Paul wrote, *“Give thanks unto the Father, which has made us able to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints of light: Who has delivered us from the power of darkness and has translated us into the Kingdom of His dear Son”* (Colossians 1:12, 13).

Our being changed on the inside affects the outside. We are changed from the inside out. If we desire our outside circumstances to change, we must first be changed on the inside. If we need

deliverance from any sin, that deliverance starts by being born-again. As we spend time with God and listen to His voice, a new tomorrow will dawn. As we come to know who God says we are and what we have, we will provoke our destiny. A new vision for life will be born. We are to make the best use of our time because the days are evil. Our new purpose now is to bring forth the kingdom of God into every aspect of our lives.

Listen to the instructions of the Apostle Paul, “...*be careful to put into action God's saving work in your lives, obeying God with deep reverence and fear. For God is working in you, giving you the desire to obey him and the power to do what pleases him. In everything you do, stay away from complaining and arguing, so that no one can speak a word of blame against you. You are to live clean, innocent lives as children of God in a dark world full of crooked and perverse people. Let your lives shine brightly before them*” (Philippians 2:12b-15, NLT).

Q: You mentioned a problem with feeling accepted earlier in the interview. Has being born-again taken care of that problem?

Yes, it's much less important that people accept you when you know the Creator of the universe accepts you in Christ. His payment for our sins took away the barrier between God and us. We're promised that when our ways please God, it will even cause our enemies to be at peace with us. Because God accepts us, we can accept others unconditionally.

I have a totally new purpose in life: to love God with all my heart, mind, soul and strength, and to love others as myself. I fall short, but my purpose is to grow moment by moment toward the high calling of God. I am unconditionally loved, completely forgiven, totally accepted and given power to live this life with a divine hope.

According to Scripture, “*God alone made it possible for you to be in Christ Jesus. For our benefit God made Christ to be wisdom itself. He is the One Who made us acceptable to God. He made us pure and holy, and He gave himself to purchase our freedom. As the Scripture says, 'The person who wishes to boast should boast only of what the Lord has done'*” (1 Corinthians 1:30, 31, NLT).

Q: Do you think your crime was God's plan for your life?

No, what I did in my past was the devil's plan for me, and I cooperated. “*People ruin their lives by their own foolishness...*” (Proverbs 19:3, NLT). God has surely opened my eyes. Jesus said of the devil, “*The thief's purpose is to steal and kill and destroy*” (John 10:10, NLT).

Jesus told the unsaved, “*For you are the children of your father the devil, and you love to do the evil things he does. He was a murderer from the beginning and has always hated the truth. There is no truth in him. When he lies, it is consistent with his character; for he is a liar and the father of lies*” (John 8:44, NLT).

The enemy's plan always involves death and destruction. But God came through Jesus Christ to give new life and “...*life in all its fullness*” (John 10:10, NLT). He has a wonderful plan and future for all of us who will receive Him. He pardoned us of our sins 2000 years ago — past, present and future. He gave us power over the lies of the enemy, but we must wake up to the truth of this Good News. I experience the truth of my salvation daily, through a loving relationship with my heavenly Father.

Although I listened to the wrong voice in my early years, God's divine will is greater. He is forgiving, merciful, gracious, patient and abounding in goodness and truth. Even when I was

dead in my sin, He made me alive, together with Christ when He raised Him from the dead. Salvation was God's plan for my life, along with telling the world about the testimony of Jesus Christ.

Q: Do you think what you are doing is your destiny?

My destiny was to fulfill my God-given calling in this life on Earth. God knew I would turn from Him in unbelief as a child, and where I would end up — He is all-knowing. In spite of my gross error, God placed me back on His path. His calling upon my life as a preacher of the Gospel is now being fulfilled daily.

The Lord promises those in captivity, *“For I know the plans I have for you, says the Lord. ‘They are plans for good and not for disaster, to give you a future and a hope’”* (Jeremiah 29:11, NLT).

His plan was my salvation, not that I would do what I did. God forbid! I am now reaping the consequences. I was given a second chance to turn my life around, even though I didn't give my victims that chance. Nothing can change the crime; it is still evil, tragic, senseless and unjust. God had great mercy upon my life. I don't fully understand why, but He did.

I rest on His promises: *“But God is so rich in mercy, and He loved us so very much, that even while we were dead because of our sins, He gave us life when He raised Christ from the dead... For He raised us up from the dead along with Christ, and we are seated with Him in the heavenly realms... And so God can always point to us as examples of the incredible wealth of His favor and kindness toward us, as shown in all He has done for us through Christ Jesus”* (Ephesians 2:4-7, NLT).

Epilogue

The questions are never ending. I'm sure you have many questions lingering in your mind. I'd be interested in hearing those questions for an eventual update. I am amazed at the Manson phenomenon and how much has been written, and still, there are so many questions. It seems there are more questions about my present and future left unanswered than about my past.

I give my time to ministering to the men in prison with me, and to other prisoners through my participation with non-profit ministries. My vision for ministry is not limited to prison. I also hope to reach those imprisoned by sin throughout greater society.

Like a lot of people I hear from, I'm tired of hearing about the crime. I'd like it to go away, not for my sake, but should it have such place in the hearts and minds of society? Some would say we must not forget, but we must learn from it so that history will not repeat itself. The interest the crime has generated gives me the opportunity to educate and hopefully to rescue others from making the same mistakes I have made, but sometimes I throw my hands up saying, "Enough!" I don't expect the Manson madness to go away any time soon, though.

I have intentionally avoided answering questions about the gory details of the crime. It's not that I'm unwilling to discuss this, or avoiding responsibility, but to keep looking at the pictures of the horror only perpetuates the violence. This is not my desire.

Some of you may be upset with my stand for a more merciful society, but I pray you will understand; my sin was ugly, so my need for God's mercy is great. Is it strange that I would now side with mercy for others, since God has extended His hand of mercy to me so greatly? Don't you need God's mercy, too?

It has been said that "the centerpiece of all heaven is mercy." God showed Moses His tender mercy, compassion and forgiveness, and Christ exemplified it. What would Jesus do? When we're born from above, we partake of His merciful divine nature. I pray that you will come over on God's side of the fence, instead of the more popular side. Remember, His mercy is everlasting.

I'm often asked if I think I'll ever get out of prison. I see my fate as pretty much sealed in the eyes of man, but I agree with Christ, "*...with men it is impossible, but not with God: for with God all things are possible*" (Mark 10:27). My friends encourage me saying, "You shouldn't give up hope." I haven't! I have learned to be content and to leave things I cannot change in God's hands. Whether in or out of prison, I am free in Christ. God's grace is sufficient.

God's purpose in our lives is to show that He is greater than the darkness that we gave ourselves to in the past. Jesus is greater than weaknesses, generational sins, character defects and inherited disorders. He is greater than unholy bonds and ties, victim mentality, unforgiveness, sexual perversions, satanic music and rituals, illegal drugs and every other dark thing in all creation. Our God is an awesome God. When the Spirit of truth frees us, we are free indeed to inherit all things that our Father intended for us as His children. By His holy command and authority, He sends mighty angels to guard all areas vacated by the forces of evil. His Holy Spirit fills us. Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty.

Undoubtedly, some will say that I have “found religion.” To the contrary, God found me. I simply have a daily relationship with my Heavenly Father. I'm no longer trying to reach God. He has reached me.

All my life, starting from my mother's womb, I was expecting things around me to supply my need. I remained in unbelief for years in my sin. I was looking for love and acceptance that only the kingdom of God could supply. The Lord came to me in my sin saying, “*My kingdom is not in food or drink, but in righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.*” Finally, I saw that only God could supply all my need according to His riches in glory through Christ Jesus. This is Good News.

What can we say then? A group of lost, disobedient children came together giving control of their lives to Charles Manson. They lived a self-deluded lifestyle in rebellion, fear and anger, medicating their pain with drugs, sex and a false sense of family. This counterfeit love and false appreciation, along with peer pressure and a slavish obedience to Manson, compelled them to murder for acceptance and self-worth. They exchanged their freedom for something they felt more valuable.

Many of you may be somewhat bothered by how much the devil has been mentioned in this interview. I'll admit that I questioned that myself, but let's straighten that out. Because of Jesus Christ, he is a defeated foe, but he, the deceiver, is still ruining the lives of many. His works must be exposed! His works prevail because of our ignorance of the finished work of Christ. His chief way of deception is through our believing his “lies.” Our unbelief in Jesus holds us captive to a defeated foe. We are to combat every demonic thought with the “truth.” I hope you have been encouraged to listen to the truth of God's Word; things that are honorable, right, pure, lovely, admirable, excellent and worthy of praise; not the delusional voice of demons. The truth is found in the Good News of Jesus Christ and His blood shed on Calvary. Confessing and believing the finished work of Jesus casts down every contrary memory and imagination. My prayer is that you will begin to evaluate your every thought (2 Corinthians 10:3-6).

Today, millions of people are in bondage without even knowing it. My website will help you to receive revelation and knowledge of the power of God to deliver you from the lies that hold you in bondage. The Lord Jesus Christ made it clear that, “... *you will know the truth, and the truth shall set you free*” (John 8:32,7, NLT). My purpose is to help you get in touch with Jesus Christ, so you can receive freedom through Him. We have been prisoners long enough.

In this interview, I've related many Biblical concepts. I don't take credit for all of the Spiritual revelation that has become mine. I'm so thankful to the body of Christ, and for those gifted Saints who through the Holy Spirit, have taught me so much over the years.

Often I'm asked whom I admire most. That's easy! Jesus Christ, who loved me and gave His life for me. My dad, who is now with the Lord. He did his best to provide for his family. My mom, from whom I've squeezed rivers of unconditional love. She, too, is with Jesus. I admire men like Billy Graham, the late Chaplain Ray Hoekstra, Pastor Chuck Smith, Charles Stanley and many others who have given their lives for the sake of the Gospel.

I'd like to pray the prayer of the Apostle Paul with you from Ephesians 1:16-23. Please pray this aloud with me: “*I pray for you constantly, asking God, the glorious Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, to give*

you spiritual wisdom and understanding, so that you might grow in your knowledge of God. I pray that your hearts will be flooded with light so that you can understand the wonderful future He has promised to those He called. I want you to realize what a rich and glorious inheritance He has given to His people. I pray that you will begin to understand the incredible greatness of His power for us who believe Him. This is the same mighty power that raised Christ from the dead and seated Him in the place of honor at God's right hand in the heavenly realms. Now He is far above any ruler or authority or power or leader or anything else in the world or in the world to come. And God has put all things under the authority of Christ, and He gave Him this authority for the benefit of the church. And the church is His body; it is filled by Christ, who fills everything everywhere with His presence” (NLT).

This is a prayer for Godly wisdom and understanding. It is God's way of living — the best. If you are tired of receiving hand-me-downs from this life, receive the life of God today. This life is the abundant life that Jesus offers to everyone. He died on the cross for your sin so that you can live in God's presence forever.

Where does your life go from here? It depends on your choice. God is calling you by His Spirit just by the mere fact that you are reading this book. He wants you! He desires for you to draw near to Him, and He promises to draw near to you. If you will give time and focus to God, He will show Himself to you, and reveal His will for your life. To whom you give your time and focus is whom you become like.

Everyone is doing time. I may be in prison, but you are too, if you do not know Christ. Your prison is one of spiritual bondage. It is time to break out and make a decision for Christ. He is knocking, and empowering you to open your door right now. He wants to breathe new life into you, but you must first admit you need help.

“When I think of the wisdom and scope of God's plan, I fall on my knees and pray to the Father, the Creator of everything in heaven and on earth. I pray that from His glorious, unlimited resources He will give you mighty inner strength through His Holy Spirit. And I pray that Christ will be more and more at home in your hearts as you trust in Him. May your roots go down deep into the soil of God's marvelous love. And may you have the power to understand, as all God's people should, how wide, how long, how high, and how deep His love really is. May you experience the love of Christ, though it is so great you will never fully understand it. Then you will be filled with the fullness of life and power that comes from God.

Now glory be to God! By His mighty power at work within us, He is able to accomplish infinitely more than we would ever dare to ask or hope. May He be given glory in the church and in Christ Jesus forever and ever through endless ages. Amen” (Ephesians 3:14-21, NLT).

The Gospel

Eternal life is a gift from God (Romans 6:23) available free for the asking because of a love story written in blood on a wooden cross 2000 years ago. Without this wonderful gift, mankind is eternally separated from God and will suffer everlasting punishment (2 Thessalonians 1:8).

God is holy and righteous (Habakkuk 1:2) and must punish sin (Exodus 34:6, 7). Everyone is conceived in sin, born a sinner and enters the world under the judgment of God (Romans 3:10, 23). The penalty of sin is death (Romans 6:23), and the second death is the eternal lake of fire (Revelation 20:14).

We can be reconciled to God only through His Son, Jesus Christ (John 14:6). Jesus, the second Person of the triune God, lived a perfectly righteous life by obeying (Hebrews 7:26) and fulfilling the law of God (Colossians 2:14). God demands perfect righteousness to enter heaven (Revelation 21:27). Since it is impossible for sinners to become righteous, God offers us the righteousness of His Son as a gift (Romans 5:17) to those who come to Him with empty hands of faith. God justifies [declares righteous] the wicked by their faith in the only righteous One — Jesus Christ (Romans 4:5). Those God justifies, He will glorify (Romans 8:30).

Eternal life is free to all who receive it by faith alone because Jesus paid the ransom for our redemption with His shed blood (Titus 2:13, 14). Jesus, the sinless Savior, took upon Himself the wrath of God, paying the death penalty that God demands for sinners (Romans 5:8).

The gift of eternal life can only be received by repentance (Acts 3:19) and faith (John 3:36). This gift is eternally secure because God's gifts are irrevocable (Romans 11:29).

Salvation can only be received by grace, God's ability through the finished work of Calvary's cross (Ephesians 2:8, 9). It cannot be merited by righteous deeds (Titus 3:5) because anyone who attempts to earn acceptance before God by their own works nullifies the grace of God (Romans 11:6).

Those who receive Jesus Christ by faith are adopted into God's eternal family (John 1:12) and nothing can ever separate them from God's love (Romans 8:28, 29). Jesus Christ loses no one that the Father gives Him (John 6:39).

Have you received God's gift of eternal life? Do you know if all your sins are completely forgiven? Do you know if you have been reconciled to God? If not, why not forsake all attempts to save yourself, repent from your dead works (Hebrews 6:1) and put all your trust and confidence in the Lord Jesus Christ. Believe the promises of God as revealed in His Holy Word. Then find a church that has Biblical integrity so you can worship God in Spirit and Truth (John 4:24). This will help you grow in the grace and knowledge of Jesus Christ, our wonderful Savior.

PRAYER OF SURRENDER

Father, I surrender my life to Your plan for me. I believe that You sent Your Son Jesus to take my sin, guilt and pain upon Himself, so that I could be made right with You. I believe my sins are completely forgiven because of the precious blood of Jesus. Forgive me for trying to save myself by my own good works. I turn to You with all my heart, and trust only in the finished work of

Calvary. Thank you for this awesome gift of eternal life. Thank you for taking up residence in my heart and for inviting me into your glorious Kingdom. I commit my life to serving before Your throne forever. Amen!

Other Books By Charles

Will You Die For Me? provides an inside view of the Manson madness through the executioner. But Charles' story does not end there. His story goes beyond Helter Skelter and death to a new life in Christ. His final release from his terrifying past stands as a universal source of hope, pointing the way to a new life of joy and peace.

Christianity For Fools is all about being right with God. These thirteen chapters plus glossary and diagrams will help you understand that righteousness, peace and joy comes from being right with God. At last, you can be free from pain and have rest with God. A sequel to Manson's Right-Hand Man Speaks Out!

Our Identity: Spirit, Soul and Body is for both the unbeliever and the believer in Christ. Unbelievers will see what they are missing by not receiving the gift of righteousness. Believers will be encouraged to put on their identity in Christ and to reign in this life with purpose, power and passion.

Appendix

Jesus says, “*Search the Scriptures...they...testify of me.*” (John 5:39). Indeed, they do! Jesus portrait is found in every book of the Bible.

- In **Genesis**: Jesus is The Seed of The Woman, a descendant of Abraham, a king in the line of Judah in the order of Melchizedek. The sacrificed Son (as like Isaac, Genesis 22) and a rejected brother (as like Joseph, Genesis 27).
- In **Exodus**: Jesus is The Passover Lamb, the leader and deliverer out of slavery (as like Moses), the manna from heaven, the rock that gave water, the Tabernacle in the camp and every item inside (Brazen Altar, Lampstand, Table of Showbread, Ark of the Covenant, etc.).
- In **Leviticus**: Jesus is The High Priest, personified by the sacrifices and offering, the Jewish festivals (Passover, Atonement, Trumpets, etc.). The scapegoat and what Christ does as our high priest.
- In **Numbers**: Jesus is The Cloud and The Fire, the Messiah that would be King. The healer in the bronze serpent. The Water from the Rock.
- In **Deuteronomy**: Jesus is The Prophet Like Moses, worshipped by angels. He is the cities of refuge.
- In **Joshua**: Jesus is The Captain of Our Salvation, our leader into the promise land (as like Joshua), the commander-in-chief of the Army.
- In **Judges**: Jesus is The Judge And Lawgiver, the true judge for the living and the dead.
- In **Ruth**: Jesus is The Kinsman Redeemer, the descendent of Boaz and Ruth. As personified by Boaz.
- In **1 & 2 Samuel**: Jesus is The Prophet of the LORD, exalted by God with power. A descendent of David, personified by David – the exiled King. The faithful friend (Jonathan).
- In **1 & 2 Kings, 1 & 2 Chronicles**: Jesus is The Reigning King, for the Millennial Reign (as like Solomon). Multiplying bread and healing leper (as like Elisha).
- In **Ezra**: Jesus is The Faithful Scribe, the builder of the temple (Zerubbabel).
- In **Nehemiah**: Jesus is The Rebuilder of The Broken Down Walls, the rebuilder of the walls of salvation (as like Nehemiah).
- In **Esther**: Jesus is Mordecai, the personified defeater of evil. The Guardian.
- In **Job**: Jesus is The Dayspring From on High, the sufferings and the subsequent blessings (as like Job).
- In **Psalms**: Jesus is The Lord Who Is Our Shepherd, the resurrected Son of God, that was despised and crucified; Hated without cause, rejected by the Israelites. But now seated on the right hand of God.
- In **Proverbs & Ecclesiastes**: Jesus is The Wisdom of God.
- In **The Song of Solomon**: Jesus is The Lover & Bridegroom.
- In **Isaiah**: Jesus is The Suffering Servant. Born of a virgin, the Immanuel, “God with us”. The God and Man, with 7-fold spirit upon Him. He healed the blind, lame and deaf, preceded by a

forerunner. A light to the Gentiles but despised by the Israelite nation. He was whipped and beaten; and finally died as a guilt offering for sin. But He resurrected and lives forever.

- In **Jeremiah & Lamentations**: Jesus is The Weeping Prophet, the righteous Branch, our righteousness.
- In **Ezekiel**: Jesus is The son of Man, a descendent of David.
- In **Daniel**: Jesus is The Son of Man coming in the clouds of Heaven, giving an everlasting kingdom. He died 483 years after the decree to rebuild Jerusalem. Foretold He would be killed and revealed as the stone that smashed the kingdoms of the world. The fourth Man in the fiery furnace.
- In **Hosea**: Jesus is The Bridegroom Married to The Backslidden Woman, faithful to his adulterous wife.
- In **Joel**: Jesus is Baptized With The Holy Spirit And Fire, offered salvation to all mankind and baptized people with the Holy Spirit.
- In **Amos**: Jesus is The Burden Bearer, that darkens the day at noon during Messiah's death.
- In **Obadiah**: Jesus is The Mighty Savior.
- In **Jonah**: Jesus is The Forgiving God, being 3 days and 3 nights in the belly of a fish.
- In **Micah**: Jesus is The Messenger With Beautiful Feet, born in Bethlehem and from everlasting.
- In **Nahum**: Jesus is The Avenger of God's Elect.
- In **Habakkuk**: Jesus is The Great Evangelist, Crying For Revival, the Messiah that would come from Teman at His return, full of glory. With intercession and prayer for His people (Habakkuk).
- In **Zephaniah**: Jesus is The Restorer of God's Lost Heritage.
- In **Haggai**: Jesus is The Cleansing Fountain, who visited the 2nd temple.
- In **Zechariah**: Jesus is The Pierced Son, a Priest and King who rides into Jerusalem on a donkey. The Messiah who would be God and be pierced.
- In **Malachi**: Jesus is The Son of Righteousness, Rising with Healing in His Wings, the Messiah who would be God who appears at the temple and His forerunner came in the spirit of Elijah.
- In **Matthew**: Jesus is The King, the Son of David, the King of the Jews, the Son of God and the Bridegroom.
- In **Mark**: Jesus is The Wonder Worker, The Holy One of God, the Servant, the King of Israel.
- In **Luke**: Jesus is The Son of Man, the Horn of Salvation and the Consolation of Israel.
- In **John**: Jesus is The Son of God, the Begotten Son, the Lamb of God, the Bread of Life, the Light of the World, the I AM, the Door of the Sheep, the Good Shepherd, the Resurrection and Life, the Way, the Truth and the Life. The True Vine.
- In **Acts**: Jesus is The Ascended Lord, the Prince of Life, the Judge of the living and the dead, the Just One, and the Hope of Israel.

- In **Romans**: Jesus is The Justifier, the Rock of Offense, the Deliverer, the Lord of the Dead and the living. The Root of Jesse.
- In **1 & 2 Corinthians**: Jesus is The Gifts of The Spirit, the First-Fruit and the Last Adam.
- In **Galatians**: Jesus is The One Who Sets Us Free, the Lord Jesus Christ.
- In **Ephesians**: Jesus is The Christ of Riches, the Head of All Things and the Cornerstone.
- In **Philippians**: Jesus is The God Who Meets Our Every Need, the Name Above All Names.
- In **Colossians**: Jesus is The Fullness of The Godhead, the Image of the Invisible God, the Head of the body, the Beginning, the Firstborn of the Dead and the Hope of Glory.
- In **1 & 2 Thessalonians**: Jesus is The Soon Coming King, the Lord of Peace.
- In **1 & 2 Timothy**: Jesus is The Mediator between God and Man, the King of Ages and the Mediator.
- In **Titus**: Jesus is The Faithful Pastor, the Blessed Hope. The Great God and Savior.
- In **Philemon**: Jesus is The Friend That Sticks Closer Than a Brother, the Lord Jesus Christ.
- In **Hebrews**: Jesus is The Blood That Washes Away My Sins, the Heir of All Things, the Faithful High Priest, the Author and Finisher of Our faith.
- In **James**: Jesus is The Great Physician, The Lord of Glory and the Judge at the door.
- In **1 & 2 Peter**: Jesus is The Chief Shepherd, and the Living Stone.
- In **1 & 2 & 3 John**: Jesus is The Everlasting Love, the Eternal Life and the Righteous.
- In **Jude**: Jesus is The Lord Who Came Down with 10,000 Saints, the Only Wise God, Our Savior.
- In **Revelation**: Jesus is The King of Kings and the Lord of Lords! The Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End. The Lion of the Tribe of Judah, the Word of God, the Bright Morning Star.